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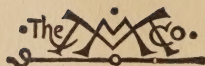




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THE TRAIL OF LIFE IN THE MIDDLE YEARS

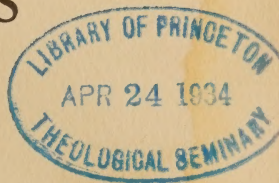


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# THE TRAIL OF LIFE IN THE MIDDLE YEARS



✓ BY

RUFUS M. JONES, LL.D., S.T.D.

*Professor of Philosophy in Haverford College*  
*Author of "Finding the Trail of Life" and*  
*"The Trail of Life in College"*

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

I HAVE already published two little Trail Books, *Finding the Trail of Life*, and *The Trail of Life in College*. They have been widely read both by young and old, and I have often been asked to add another volume to the series. I have hesitated to attempt to carry the story any farther. Whatever of charm or interest there may have been in the two earlier books was in large measure due to the simplicity of the narrative. It was the story of a boy finding himself at two stages of his formative period. It was a spontaneous report of the more or less unconscious and naïve steps from the cradle of the child to the threshold of active life.

In those early periods the Trail was *found*, not built. It was to a degree made by others and slowly discovered by the person who told the story. My two "saints," who dominate the two books—Aunt Peace in the first one, and Pliny Chase in the second one—were there waiting for me to come, to discover them and to draw upon the grace and richness of their lives. Miracles of discovery like that do not keep repeating themselves.

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One does not expect to find wayside "saints" at each epoch of the journey. The kind of saint I came to admire and to seek as guide in my middle years was not a person who could ever expect canonization by the church. It was the "happy warrior" in the everyday battles of life. It was the person who walked the common highroad as good neighbor, loyal citizen, lover of truth, with prophetic vision of the intrinsic worth of life, and with radiant light on his face.

But in any case, the time comes when the traveler must cut his own trail and make his own path if he is to count for anything. Dante, at a momentous crisis in his spiritual journey, heard his guide say to him: "Now thee o'er thyself I crown and mitre," which means that henceforth he is to be his own king and his own priest, with authority over his own acts and over his own progress. When that stage of self-development is reached it is difficult to preserve the old-time simplicity and naïveté. Life, if it is self-directed, is bound to increase in depth and in the range of inter-relationships. One can refuse to travel far beyond the coasts and margins of dependence upon others, but if he does go forward toward *realization of personality*, he will find life steadily becoming more complex and intricate. I have always liked the story of the boy in the primer class who was told by his teacher at the beginning of



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his education to say "A," as she pointed to the letter. "I am not going to say A," the boy replied, "for if I say A, you will want me to go on and say B!" He dimly foresaw the drag of the whole alphabetic system which would eventually carry him irresistibly on to Z, and with precocious wisdom he announced his declaration of independence before the remoter complications emerged.

And yet it is possible to maintain a quiet simplicity of spirit in the midst of a vast complexity of issues and tasks. The steady rainbow at Niagara curving over that tumultuous rush of ever-shifting water may perhaps be taken as a symbol of a mind which retains its inward peace and poise in the midst of the turmoil and welter of events and duties. Simplicity of life is a wholly relative matter. It is not secured necessarily by withdrawal from activity nor is it necessarily forfeited by the acceptance of heavy responsibilities of life. It will be a genuine triumph if this old-time note of simplicity which naturally belongs to youth continues to run on through these busy middle years of life. *Becoming* like a child is a very different thing from *being a child*, or from having a childish mind. None of us wants to go back to the cradle stage or to the days of the rattle and the hobby horse, but it is a mighty achievement to maintain with the maturity and strength

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of manhood, the trust and confidence, the gentleness and simplicity of an unspoiled child.

Jacob in the Genesis stories saw angels ascending and descending above him at Bethel as he started out on his journey to realize his life, but it is comforting to note that on his way back, in middle life, with his flocks and herds about him, and when he was walking in the midst of the dusty highroad, he had a return of the angels. This return of the angels in the midst of the crowded affairs of life, in the dust and heat, is still as possible as it was for an old-time patriarch on the highroad of Mahanaim and at the Jabbok. It was for this experience that John Henry Newman was longing when, in a sharp crisis of his life, he wrote the last stanza of "Lead Kindly Light":

And with the morn  
Those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since  
And lost a while.

These "angel faces" are not the spirits of beloved friends who have gone before us and are waiting to welcome us on the other shore, as so many readers may suppose; they are, rather, the aspirations and ideals of youth which have been lost or forgotten in the rush and drive of later life, but which are once more rediscovered in happy moments of vision, and which are found

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to be as full of light and as attractive as ever, smiling to us and beckoning us on.

I have implied that no single "saint" dominates this middle period of life as in the other two periods, but that must not be taken to mean that there was in this period of my journey a dearth of persons who possessed the saintly qualities of life. It becomes henceforth a cloud of witnesses rather than a single figure standing apart in solitary splendor. For the molding of my intellectual outlook in this period I owe most to my teachers at Harvard, Josiah Royce and George Herbert Palmer. Josiah Royce was utterly unique. He was one of the oddest-looking men since Socrates, whom, as has been often noted, he somewhat resembled. His mind had an extraordinary range of capacity and interests. There was a *volume* to his thought like that of a great river in full flood. His sentences rolled out as though there was an immense pressure behind. He had the moral passion of a great prophet and he always glorified the creative power of man's *will*. He was the formulator of a unique type of *idealism*, the exponent of a striking philosophy of loyalty, and the interpreter of the significance of "the beloved community" in which the individual finds his life. I was never his "disciple" in the sense that I adopted his system of thought as my own, but I was powerfully stimulated by his lectures

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and his books, and I had the rare privilege of enjoying his friendship and personal intercourse as long as he lived.

George Herbert Palmer was not the founder of a system of philosophy as Royce was, he was rather the lucid interpreter of the great ethical systems of the centuries. With him I studied Kant, Fichte, and Hegel and, what was hardly less important, in his famous course known as Phil. 4, I had from him a vital interpretation of the most significant ethical systems of modern times, including his own philosophy of life. There were profounder ethical teachers during this period, but nowhere, at home or abroad, was there to be found a teacher who had a more sure touch for the deep-lying springs of moral action, or who had a more comprehensive grasp of the ethical thinkers of the nineteenth century, or who was more luminous and revealing as an interpreter. His English style was well-nigh perfect in form, and it was a joy to listen to him. A year's work in that Phil. 4 course came nearer being a "complete education" than any other course of study I have ever known.

Under Professor Palmer's direction I made a thoroughgoing study of Thomas Hill Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics* and came for the time under the spell of that great Oxford thinker, as I had already done earlier



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with Edward Caird, the Master of Balliol. I formed an intimate and lasting friendship with Professor Palmer and I owe him an immense debt for what came to me from him. He utterly disapproved of mysticism and he disliked the basic conceptions and principles of Quakerism. They did not fit into his system of life and thought. With a frankness characteristic of his nature he used to tell me what he thought of what he liked to call my pursuit of "wandering fires," but with a kindly smile he would always end his criticisms with an affectionate appraisal of my work and my aims, and I never had any doubt that the bonds of friendship between us were deep and strong.

William James, on the other hand, had the heartiest sympathy both with my interest in mysticism and with my devotion to Quaker ideals. I never had definite university work with him, but for many years I was strongly under his influence and guidance. I began to consult him even before I was a student at Harvard, and as soon as he discovered the main lines of my interest there was no limit to his readiness, in fact eagerness, to help me forward. It was a characteristic of James to see "genius" in every young man who confided in him. He would always give up anything he might be doing to give aid and comfort to a chance visitor who was dreaming a great dream. He made one feel

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as though one's own ideas were Platonic in importance. When you saw how enthusiastic this great man was over your half-born mental child, you were assured that it must be a superlative offspring. He gave a young person a new faith in himself. You quickly believed in his belief. Like Socrates, he was a midwife of the mind for the youth of his time, though he was not quite so discriminating as Socrates was in his judgment as to which offspring was worthy of nurture and likely to be "a child of promise."

William James was so fascinating and captivating that one was always in danger of being carried off his feet by that remarkable man's enthusiasms. I went too far in my early period toward the adoption of his theories of the religious significance of the subconscious, ✓ though I never did accept the central principles of his pragmatism as a sound theory of truth. But whether I agreed or disagreed with his views, I have never regretted any aspects of the part William James played in the formation of my intellectual life or my spiritual ideals. He helped me, among other ways, to discover the importance of simplicity, as I shall indicate at a later stage. When William James died in 1910, I wrote my estimate of his work and my appreciation of his life. A short time afterwards, I received this surprising letter from Mrs. William James:

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95 Irving Street, Cambridge.

October 30, 1910.

"MY DEAR MR. JONES:

I should like to thank you for the Editorial Letter in the *American Friend* on the death of William James. Many voices have been raised in affectionate memory of a man who truly loved his kind but no one has spoken more justly or with finer appreciation than yourself.

I should like to have read it to my dear husband who counted himself so lightly—and yet *how* he honored his work and loved it!

Thanking you for our children and myself, I am,

Sincerely yours,

ALICE H. JAMES."

It was during these rich Harvard days that I formed an intimate friendship with Professor Francis G. Peabody, which has steadily grown in richness and depth through all the years that have intervened. Dr. Peabody was one of the pioneer interpreters of "the social gospel" and one of the foremost preachers of my generation. He acquired a consummately beautiful style of expression, a penetrating insight into the most significant values of life and a unique way of making some central truth of religion come to life as he unfolded its meaning. But besides all this, it was the charm of his personality and the rich and lovable qualities of his life that drew me to him. Through him I had the rare and wonderful privilege of intimate association with

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President Charles W. Eliot, who was Dr. Peabody's brother-in-law and who lived as near neighbor to him at Northeast Harbor, Maine, where most of my visits with Dr. Peabody have taken place.

One other Harvard influence ought to be singled out for special mention in this brief preliminary chapter. I studied Plato and Aristotle with George Santayana and thus entered with this extraordinary guide the spiritual domain of these two supreme thinkers of the human race. The Platonic stream of life and thought, most certainly a gulf-stream which circulates through the entire history of the Western world, has been ever since one of my major interests. It should be noted that we now think of Aristotle as a disciple of Plato rather than a rival.

During this period of intellectual preparation, I had the constant companionship of my own little boy, Lowell, to whom I had to be both father and mother. I know how easy it is to hallow the memory of a child after he is gone and to see him under the dominion of a glowing imagination. It is quite possible that I fell into that well-known habit and glorified that little Iulus of mine who walked beside me with unequal steps—*non passibus æquis*. It matters little now whether he *was* what I saw in him, or whether I throw about him a halo of my own creating. The important point is that



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he taught me more about life than any one of my philosophers did and he carried me farther into the heart of things than any one else did at that period of life. I learned through him the immortal quality of love. He loved me with a pure and exalted love that always seemed to be washed clean of all utilitarian expectation. And I loved him as a being in whom I saw the love of God revealed to me. For him the visible world was a thin veil which let God's deeper world of beauty break through into manifestation. Flowers thrilled him as though they had been angels sent to minister to him. To walk in the woods with him was like a journey to Eldorado. There was gold or the elixir of life at the end of every path.

How can one ever learn to live again after such a companion departs into the invisible? Just that lesson I had to learn, and there can be no other lesson on earth that is more difficult to learn. How little of life is in the books of the philosophers, and how much of life must be learned in the school of experience!

Through all the period covered by this book I lived in close intimacy with that fine oriental scholar and inspiring religious interpreter, Dr. George A. Barton, who was at this period a professor in Bryn Mawr College. For four years we lived in the same house and ate our meals together. We walked the beautiful roads

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around Haverford together, we sat side by side in Haverford Friends' Meeting, sharing our thoughts with that interesting group, and we travailed together as we thought our way through the spiritual problems of our time, reading pretty much the same books and working at common tasks in mutual joy. A friendship like that is a heavenly gift when it comes to a man.

## CHAPTER II

### A NEW BEGINNING

IN the early summer of 1893 two doors unexpectedly opened for me and disclosed two tasks waiting to be done, either one of them large enough for the whole of a man's energies. I have always had a propensity to take *both* alternatives when an *either-or* situation has been presented to me. It is a peculiarity of Hegel's philosophy, but I had discovered the wisdom of the principle even before I had heard of Hegel. So now I resolved to enter both doors and take up both tasks. One of them was to become editor of *The Friends' Review*, a weekly Quaker periodical, published in Philadelphia; the other was to become Instructor in Philosophy in Haverford College, with the prospect of being eventually professor. I had for many years, though quite unconscious of these goals, been preparing for these two tasks. When they suddenly knocked at my door, I "felt in my bones," as we say in popular speech, that I was ready for them and, at least in spirit, matched with the call of the hour.

*The Friends' Review* was at the time in its forty-

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seventh volume, having had its birth in 1847, in the midst of a disastrous Quaker controversy, which brought a sad "separation" in the Quaker fellowship. *The Friends' Review* represented in the period of its birth, the "evangelical" or "progressive" section of the Society of Friends in America. It especially appealed to those who were in sympathy with the famous English Quaker leader, Joseph John Gurney, who had been one of the causes of the "separation." *The Friend* of Philadelphia was the conservative paper, expressing in large degree the ideas and ideals of those who were popularly called "Wilburites," so called because of their sympathy or affiliation with John Wilbur, the stern opponent of Gurney. The controversy which had been the occasion for the birth of *The Friends' Review* had become a dead issue before I came on the scene, and that old Gurney-Wilbur straw, so empty of seed corn, will not need to be threshed over again here.

It will be only for a brief space, here in the foreground, that Quaker issues will be in the focus. The picture will soon widen out and include the central spiritual movements of the time. I must begin with the actual tasks which lay straight in front of me. There are distinct advantages in belonging to a specific religious denomination, as there are of having membership in a definite family group. The interests which are

aroused by such fellowship, and the loyalties that are formed by it, become a part of one's deepest life. It is well-nigh impossible to be religious in the abstract; one must specify his aim and make his faith concrete. But *sectarianism* is a wholly different matter. That is a narrowing influence. It tends to shut a person up inside of a paled fence which hems and confines the soul. I am not interested in the work of the scribe whose main concern is to guard what *has been*, but I am profoundly interested in the prophet of whatever denomination who is concerned with *the splendor of the forward vision*.

Queen Sophie Charlotte was asked once by the philosopher Leibnitz if she would like to hear him expound his theory of the "infinitely little." "No," said the Queen, wearily, "I have heard enough all my life of the infinitely little!" These controversies over minute issues had best be left in the dim, forgotten corners where they belong, though at the time they seemed far from small issues. In 1893 there were other issues to the fore, many of them very much *alive* and some of them *vital* for all serious-minded men and women of all communions. It was into these vital issues that I soon found myself plunged and it will be of them that I shall mainly speak in these pages. Some of the foreground problems will no doubt appear to some readers



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to be "minute," perhaps "infinitely small" issues, but in any case they had to be faced by an editor at that period.

Religious thinking in America was in this period quite pitifully in a state of confusion, and, for the honor of truth, it must be said that some confusion still remains! Many of the formulations of Christianity which formed the main stock of thinking had been brought into definite form in times of intense conflict and they still bore the marks of the turmoil of battle. Many of the ideas which passed for current thinking had come out of crude and primitive times, and had never been through the crucible of critical examination. A large part of our American sectarian confusion, and our Babel controversies, were "survivals" of issues no longer significant, continuing by the drift or momentum of bygone times. They had their origin in, and they still flourished on, misinterpretations of favorite selected texts, or on the beloved theory that a perfect church pattern lies concealed either in the writings of the New Testament, or in those of the Apostolic Fathers, though unfortunately two persons seldom wholly agree as to the details of that perfect pattern. It was, too, very disturbing to discover, as I soon did do, the general confusion which prevailed among the followers of Christ about what He meant by His Kingdom. The word

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was always on His lips. Most of His parables were concerned with its spread. He lived for it; He prayed for its coming on earth; He died to establish it. And yet nobody seemed to know what it meant and there was little agreement as to the nature of it. What strange people Christians are, not to take more pains seriously and profoundly to understand their own central truths!

The great revival movement led by Moody and Sankey which had swept over the American churches in the 'seventies and 'eighties had profoundly altered the Society of Friends in many parts of the country, especially in the Middle West, in parts of New York, New England and North Carolina. Revival meetings of the Moody type were held in most of the regions where there were Friends, and in natural course large numbers of converts who had been "awakened" by the revival joined the Quaker meetings in these communities. The newcomers were not accustomed to silent worship. They had no historical background of that sort. They had no established Quaker *habits and customs* transmitted from generation to generation. They had no Quaker "psychological climate," no pre-formed ideas and ideals which operated night and day in their lives as a silent leaven. They had been unaccustomed to the spontaneous and unpremeditated type of preaching with which all old-time Quaker groups were very

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familiar. And many of them might almost as well have been expected to walk a tight-rope successfully without practice as to adjust themselves suddenly and without training to the forms, and absences of form, that had grown up and grown sacred in Quaker assemblies during the preceding two hundred years. In the revival meetings in which most of these new members had been converted, there had been lively singing of the Sankey hymns, the emotional tone had run high, the Scriptures had held a foremost place in the teaching, the preaching had been carefully prepared and focussed upon a definite aim, the theology had been intensely "evangelical." The doctrines proclaimed were rigidly Calvinistic, and consequently as far removed as possible from the basic Quaker conception of a divine light, a seed of God, implanted in the soul of man.

Joseph John Gurney and his friends had to some extent, though unconsciously, prepared the way for this new order of things. Gurney had the theological outlook of eighteenth-century evangelical thought and he had consequently a very feeble comprehension of the central Quaker conception either of God, of man, or of man's salvation. He was, without being fully aware of it, introducing into the Society of Friends, a revolutionary system of thought, basically Calvinistic, and he was inclined to raise the Scriptures to an exalted posi-

tion and correspondingly to deprecate the importance of the Inward Light, which he did not understand in the original Quaker sense, though he always supposed that he understood it. He, however, was in every way loyal to the Quaker ideals of worship. The new "revivalist" Friends, on the other hand, were ready, and even eager, for a root-and-branch transformation not only of Quaker theology but of Quaker practices as well. The change of base that, in fact, occurred in many Quaker centers in these momentous years, was nothing short of a revolution, though at first few of the membership suspected how profoundly revolutionary it was. Revolutions which come gradually never seem to be as revolutionary as they really are.

The "awakening" which, through the revival movement, swept over the Society of Friends in sections that were sympathetic with the Gurney point of view, brought at first a quite remarkable quality of freshness, life and power. It seemed like a new birth, or a vernal equinox, coming to many old established meetings which had become dull and cold and lifeless. In place of the long stretches of silence which, it must be admitted, were often formal and sterile, there came times of enthusiastic hymn-singing, followed by many fervent prayers and still more "testimonies" of glowing religious experience. Meetings for worship soon came to

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be "experience-meetings," very much like the early Methodist type. But as everybody knows, "testimonies" grow monotonous when they are endlessly repeated. An "experience" which seems rich and vital the first time it is told becomes wooden, or something worse, when it has been told with slight variations a score of times, or sad to reflect upon, a hundred times. Young people soon begin to groan, not to say revolt, under that kind of warmed-over spiritual food. When the emotional thrill wanes away as it always does, for that is a way emotional tones have of doing, there is not much left to feed the soul. There were quite naturally attempts made to repeat the "revival," to call for an *encore*, to revivify those who had grown dull, to reclaim "backsliders" of whom there were many, and to pump up the waning life and enthusiasm. But there is a limit to the process of encoring emotional revivals, and the limit is soon reached.

Something radically different had to be introduced, if these meetings were to go on and were to hold their membership together. The situation called for the wisest statesmanship anywhere existent to meet a marked crisis. The ancient Society of Friends which had been running noiselessly as on oiled grooves, found itself confronted by a *condition*, not by a theory, and no one in particular was to blame for the changed situation.



A new epoch had dawned. There it was, as plain as a pikestaff. It called for historical insight. It was one of those moments when an ancient system of religious thought and practice must of necessity readjust itself and adapt itself to meet an altered condition, which a few years earlier had been unpredictable. Under such circumstances it is always important to discover the essential and eternal aspects of the faith, to hold on to those aspects as a priceless jewel and, in making the necessary adjustment, to preserve historical continuity. The most important service, in such a crisis, is that of ignoring nonessential trappings and superfluous accumulations, while at the same time concentrating with prophetic insight upon essential principles. It is there in that essential feature that statesmanship is so important, and, if that is lacking, expediency is pretty sure to take its place.

What I am dealing with here, in this crisis-emergency in the small religious body to which I belong, is not the trivial matter it might at first seem to be to the casual reader, for it brings to light principles of life which are as universal as organized Christianity and as significant as faith itself. These epochs of readjustment come to all religious bodies in the world and they mark a crisis of existence and of mission. The well-known easy tendency is to "blame" someone for introducing the up-

setting disturbance, to pillory some victim as a "heretic" because he will not follow the groove. But what is urgently needed in such crises is a sound diagnosis of the condition and a fresh plotting out of the true line of march.

The crisis in this instance unfortunately was met without much statesmanship. Those who knew most about the past and who possessed the deepest grasp of the central principles of Quakerism lined up on the conservative side and refused to coöperate with the more radical leaders. It was one of those tragic situations, so common in history, when the radicals and the conservatives break apart and each goes his separate way, the driving power of the radical wing operating with no restraining check from the brakes on the conservative side. The outcome, in short, was the transformation of the meeting for worship of the type held on the basis of silence and obedience to the guidance of the Spirit, into a church service of the usual Protestant type, only somewhat cruder and less refined by generations of experiment, as in the case of the older denominations. A pastor was installed, an organ was introduced into the precincts of the meetinghouse, a choir in many instances was organized, a pulpit took the place of the old-time long ministers' gallery with its double levels, and the order of service became standardized with the

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well-known order of programed service. If there was silence in the new stage it was introduced by the pastor as a brief part of the regularized program. The lay-functions of the democratic Quaker congregation were rapidly absorbed by the pastor, and the well-known division of lay and clerical orders became fixed. With these changes theological doctrines soon came to be questions of supreme importance. Wherever Calvin enters, theology enters with him, and orthodoxy assumes a major rôle in the drama, with its tragic heart-burnings.

There were, therefore, when I took up the editorship in 1893, four well-marked types of Quakerism in America: (1) the moderate-liberal type, represented by *The Friends' Review*, which I was to edit; (2) the radically evangelical type with its pastoral meetings, represented by a periodical published in Chicago, named *The Christian Worker*; (3) the ultra-conservative type represented by *The Friend*, with its nucleus of strength in Philadelphia, though there was also a strong conservative body in Ohio and small, similar groups in other parts of the country. To make the tale complete, it should be added (4) that there were numerous groups of Friends in Philadelphia and elsewhere popularly known as "Hicksites," who had emerged from the separations in 1827-28, and who were regarded by the

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"Orthodox" as ultra-liberal. Their largest group and their headquarters were in Philadelphia. They had a live and interesting periodical in *The Friends' Intelligencer*.

The conservative bodies mentioned above had carried over from the eighteenth century an excessive emphasis on traits of Quietism and with that quietistic emphasis went a unique estimate of the importance of "plainness in speech and apparel," which amounted to a rigid form of language and dress. With this insistence on what had come to be a "sacred" form of speech and garb, these conservative Friends had become rigidly puritanic in their opposition to music, to the drama, including Shakespeare and to fine arts in general. They thought of themselves as "a remnant of a peculiar people," with a precious "heritage" to be kept and guarded. They were as an organized body, a people apart. They had severed their official contacts with all other Quaker bodies, including English Quakers, and they were to a remarkable degree insulated from the world and from the churches of organized Christianity. They had lost the aggressive marching power of primitive Quakerism. They were instead the guardians of a heritage rather than the conquerors of new territory. Their gravest danger, of course, was the tendency to become ingrown and static. But they nevertheless con-

tinued to produce many saintly lives and many consummately beautiful characters.

Fortunately, this extremely conservative body of Friends in Philadelphia contained a goodly number of wide-awake, well-educated, prosperous and broad-minded members, many of whom owed the intensity of their religious faith to the stirring preaching and the writings of Joseph John Gurney. Haverford College in the main was managed by Friends of this type, and it was pervaded with an atmosphere of liberal and progressive thought. Friends of the broad and liberal spirit, in general in sympathy with Gurney, had started and guided *The Friends' Review*. They had, furthermore, with helpers from Baltimore and New York, been in 1885 the creators of Bryn Mawr College, whose founder was Dr. Joseph Taylor, of Burlington, New Jersey, and whose first president was Dr. James E. Rhoads, both of them typical examples of this broad, liberal, Quaker spirit of the Gurney type.

The conservative Friends at this period controlled and dominated the Yearly Meeting—i.e., the central official Body—which was held at Arch Street. The men and women who shaped the life of Haverford and Bryn Mawr, and who edited and managed *The Friends' Review*, had at the time almost no share in the official councils of this central body, and if they spoke it was



with little weight. They were at the fringe, not at the center of its life, and yet, as events proved, the future was in their hands. They had the precious leaven that was eventually to leaven the whole group.

I must pause here now and give a few brief sketches of some of the men with whom my labors were to be most intimately bound up in my new spheres of action. The person who easily came first in any such list was Isaac Sharpless, who had been a professor of mathematics and astronomy in Haverford College since 1875, dean of the college from 1884 to 1887 and president since 1887, in which position he was to continue with steadily growing leadership for thirty years. He had been born and nurtured in a conservative Quaker home and had received the major part of his education at Westtown Boarding School, at a period when it was a nursery of the ideals and traditions of the most conservative element in the Society of Friends. Furthermore, he had not come under the influences of Gurney or his followers, as was the case with nearly all my other friends and helpers at this period. He gradually broadened his outlook and widened his interests as he matured and developed. There was no sharp break in his life, no epoch when he passed through a spiritual crisis. He read the best books, studied history, became interested in the problems of education, formed wide

acquaintance with the important personalities of his time, and, possessed as he was of a well-endowed mind, he grew like a maturing plant into a very remarkable life.

His influence could not be overlooked even by the conservative wing, and among the liberals of the Philadelphia group he became a recognized leader from the beginning of his presidency. He was solidly behind *The Friends' Review*, it was he who first suggested my name when a new editor was being selected for it, and it was through his insight that an opportunity for a wider intellectual career was provided for me through a department of congenial work in Haverford College. For the rest of Isaac Sharpless' life I was to be as intimately linked up with him in work and fellowship as two men know how to be joined together.

Next in importance came James Wood of Mount Kisco, New York. He was a Manager of Haverford College, a Trustee of Bryn Mawr College, a staunch supporter of and contributor to *The Friends' Review*, a little later to be clerk of New York Yearly Meeting, and already a Friend of international influence and weight. He was prominent in the councils of many humanitarian causes and interested in all constructive Christian movements. He was a liberal-evangelical Friend, a genuine sympathizer with the message of

Gurney, though he was to grow steadily in the direction of modern thought as time went on. He had been selected to preside over an all-Friends Conference which had been held in Richmond, Indiana, in 1887, and he was probably at the time the best-known American Friend and the one in whom Friends of all types felt most confidence. He and I were to work together for the rest of his life in almost continual relationship and in very close intimacy.

Dr. James E. Rhoads was, at the time of my coming to Philadelphia, president of Bryn Mawr College. He had been editor of *The Friends' Review* before accepting the presidency of the college; he was profoundly interested in the cause of the American Indians, in the promotion of peace and in a striking degree dedicated to the essential ideals of the Society of Friends. He was one of the foremost preachers of that Society, though, owing to his breadth and liberality, he never received official "recognition" of his spiritual gift. He was a man of rare tenderness and gentleness of spirit. He was heart and soul in sympathy with my labors, but unfortunately his life was cut short before my work was much more than launched.

John B. Garrett of Rosemont, Pennsylvania, a Manager of Haverford, a Trustee of Bryn Mawr, a devoted supporter of *The Friends' Review*, gave me in these

early days the most loyal backing and support. He was vice-president of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, a man of wide business interests, but primarily and above everything else concerned for the promotion of the type of religious faith in which he had been nurtured, which was evangelical Quakerism of the Joseph John Gurney brand. He, like Dr. Rhoads, had preached with fervor and enthusiasm for many years without being "recognized" officially by the conservative-minded body in whose hands such action rested. He had a beautiful home in Rosemont, noted for its hospitality, and I was always welcomed there as though it were a kind of second home of mine.

In Baltimore I had the constant support and friendship of Dr. James Carey Thomas. He had been one of the creators both of Johns Hopkins University and of Bryn Mawr College. He was the father of M. Carey Thomas, the first dean and second president and throughout master builder of Bryn Mawr College. He was a "cure of souls" as well as a healer of bodies, and in the ripe period when I knew him best, he was one of the major spiritual influences in the city of Baltimore. When he died in 1898 I was chosen to succeed him as trustee of Bryn Mawr College. His brother, Dr. Richard H. Thomas, was becoming about this time one of the most effective interpreters of a broader

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Quakerism which could adapt itself to the expanding scientific and historical knowledge of the century. With him I was to have close and happy fellowship.

I could not have carried my undertakings forward successfully without the substantial financial help which came generously from David Scull, T. Wistar Brown and Joshua L. Baily, three remarkable Quaker business men, dominated to the point of inspiration with spiritual idealism. They were double my own age, but from the first they caught my youthful vision, gave me their intimate friendship and with spontaneous generosity backed up my efforts to interpret spiritual ideals in a new and difficult epoch. These are only a selected few out of a large list of persons, without whom I could not have made either my faith or my works effective.

One of the features of my life which interests me most in retrospect is my close fellowship with these men of an earlier generation. I became as intimate with these men as I had been with my college classmates. The difference in age fell away as a matter of no importance. It was a new discovery to me that years did not make a person old, that it is possible to preserve the spirit of youth clear up to the end of the Biblical period assigned to life—and beyond it. Isaac Sharpless would have been young, if he had lengthened out to Methuselah's span of years, and in a lesser degree it was



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true of my other friends of those years. Their friendship and fellowship and, I may say, comradeship form for me a rich legacy in my memory, and their loyal backing of my work was like a tower of strength in the day of battle.

## CHAPTER III

### SOME OF THE PROBLEMS

WHEN I began my career as editor and faced all these divisions of Quakerism and these divergent lines of interpretation, I quietly knew that I belonged to none of the divisions, not even to the Gurney group in which my early roots of life had been formed. Under the wise guidance of Pliny Chase in college, and through my historical studies, I had discovered that Quakerism in its essential meaning was a movement and not a narrow *sect*, with a static creed and an unalterable set of practices and "testimonies" which must at all cost be guarded and preserved as *the unchanging Quaker faith*.

I saw with some clarity that every one of the four prevailing types of Quakerism at that period had managed to seize and carry on some vital aspects of the movement which George Fox inaugurated in the middle of the seventeenth century, but I saw equally clearly that no one of the four types in its isolation was an adequate continuation of the spiritual life-stream which took its historical direction from that remarkable man.

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I highly resolved not to be a "sectarian" and not to be stranded on any one of the islands which the central stream had formed. In fact, I could not have remained a Quaker at all, if I had thought that it involved being a member of a "sect," and being identified with an arrested form of Christianity.

It seemed to me that the most urgent task in hand was to discover what were the *essential aspects* of this spiritual movement to which I belonged, what was its historical significance, and how it might be related to a universal type of spiritual Christianity, true and vital for all God's children in all churches, and even for those who in the perplexities of the moment might belong to none.

What seemed to me to be the most obvious feature of primitive Quakerism, i.e., Quakerism at its birth, and of all vital Quakerism in its historical periods as well, was the inward, immediate assurance of God which possessed its founder, George Fox, and his greatest followers in true "apostolic succession." Wherever the movement, called at first, in scorn, "Quakerism," had risen to a stage of power and real importance, its exponents had "known God experimentally," as Fox expressed it. The fact of "quaking," that is, trembling with strong emotion, which characterized the early movement, was due to the overmastering con-

sciousness in the souls of those men and women that the divine Spirit was a living presence in their meetings and was ready to break into manifestation through their lives, as organs of His divine purpose in the world. It was their most central faith, born out of their own experience that God and man were not separated by space—the One far-off “in the sky,” and the other “down here in mutability”—but rather that nothing except sin ever separates God and man, since they are *spiritually inter-related*. God’s nature, they believed, is essentially love, is grace, and therefore, is self-giving, outreaching. He is the eternal Seeker, the infinite Lover of souls. And the deepest thing about man is the fact that he is self-conscious spirit—made in the image of the divine Spirit—in reality unsundered from God as the stream is unsundered from the fountain which is its source, and that true “life” begins when man finds that eternal Reality to which he “belongs.” This inward junction of the soul with God Fox, and the Quakers after him, called “the Light within,” “the seed of God,” “something of God in man.” If it is true, it is universally true.

The point I fixed upon as essential was this *mystical* aspect of the Quaker movement, God discovered within man and actually revealed as a present fact to prophetic and responsive souls, who have brought their lives into

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spiritual parallelism with Him. Mysticism is a word very loosely used, and one from which many persons shy away, but it has always been used historically to signify a personal, first-hand discovery of God, a vital interaction between God and man. The Quaker movement had its birth in a profound mystical awakening and it has been, though not always quite consistently, an unbroken stream of life in which man, becoming awake to the meaning of life, has felt himself to be coöperating in love and service with God.

Emerson, in his characteristic *Essays*, had impressed this interpretation of mysticism and Quakerism upon me. So, too, had Carlyle in his *Sartor Resartus* and his *Cromwell*. Hardly less strikingly it was presented in the Quaker sections of Bancroft's *History of the United States*, which I profoundly studied and pondered over. The more I studied the history of spiritual Christianity and the course of philosophical movements since Kant and the teaching of the world's supreme poets, the more I was convinced that this direct inward experience of God, which was central in the Quaker faith, constituted the very heart and fiber of a universal Christianity for the future, living above the welter of controversies, undisturbed by scientific or historical discoveries, adaptable to all ecclesiastical forms, or absence of forms, and solidly based on the fundamental nature of man's



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soul in contact with God. That faith, to sophisticated ears to-day, perhaps sounds crude and naïve. In any case, it needs to undergo a searching and testing criticism, which it will in time receive as this story progresses, but it was a faith then which prevented me from perching on one of the time-islands in the stream and kept me moving forward with the stream itself.

My first editorial in *The Friends' Review* declared that the mission of the Journal I was beginning to edit would be to promote in every possible way "the advance of Christian Truth." "This periodical," the article continued, "is not designed to be the organ of a party or a section and it knows nothing of divisions." It will "seek to maintain and honor *spiritual realities*, rather than *forms and traditions*." "The time may not come," the article said at the end, "when we shall all see eye to eye, but we should all pray and hope and labor with sincerity and faith for the time when the essential Truths and the underlying spirit of Quakerism—we may say of apostolic Christianity—shall unite us, north and south, east and west, in one harmonious fold and family under one Shepherd and Father." If I were beginning all over again now, I should say almost exactly that same thing. The emphasis was on the advancement of Christian Truth, on spiritual realities as against forms, traditions and sectarian divisions, and finally on the essential

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Truth and the pervasive Spirit which to some degree underlay all the existent divisions.

In the same number of my first volume I had these words in a second editorial: "There are already certain fundamental Truths (I notice that I always used to spell *Truth* with a capital T) which we see alike because we are satisfied with the revelation in regard to them; in other matters and methods we widely disagree, largely perhaps because we are confident, each of us, that our idea is the right one. While if we could once behold in the universal Christian Church, and even in our branch of it, the *desire to find God's way and will*, even though our individual purposes and plans might be annihilated, Truths would begin to rise on our cleared vision like stars on the cloud-swept sky. During the remaining years of this century, and the early ones of the next century, conclusions will be reached on many questions of vital importance which will profoundly affect our faith. There should now be in all our hearts a most sincere desire to be in parallelism with the line of God's purposes. We ourselves do not make Truth, and no amount of rallying around error will make *it* Truth. By finding God's purpose or will, we have the Truth."

That passage bears, no doubt, the marks and the tone of youth, but the point I am most interested in now,

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after forty years, is that I then foresaw the profound testings of faith that were to come with the new century and that I was prepared to meet them calmly and fearlessly, and that I already knew that "cocksureness" of mind was not necessarily proof positive that one's pet idea was *true*—"no amount of rallying around error will make it Truth." That is, almost certainly, still a fact!

The editorials in my second number were devoted to an interpretation of Personal Experience and inward Light. "There is a vast difference," I said, "between assenting with the mind to a statement of Truth, *and* knowing in one's inmost self, and showing by a growing spiritual life, that that same Truth is a reality of personal experience, that you *possess* the Truth and that it *possesses* you." Here I was insisting that assent to credal statements "put up in nicely worded packages," might very easily leave your life and spirit unaltered and your deeper nature untransformed, might in fact make you *hate* those who differed from you, while the real test of a Truth always is its power to produce moral transformation and personal spiritual growth. "Those whose religion means glad yielding to the will of God," I maintained, "*soul-acquaintance* with Him and growth through the quickening of His life, know and love each other and reach out hands of help, while they pray not

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only for God's kingdom to come, but for the brotherhood of man, the unity of humanity by the fulfilment of the divine idea."

I went on to point out that "this religion of inward experience" cannot be turned into "a belief in some external transaction" without losing the very substance of its meaning, and that when the inward Light itself passes over from being a fact of experience to being a mere statement of doctrine, as it too often does do, it immediately ceases to work miracles in the soul. "What George Fox stood upon as a fact impossible of contradiction was that *he* knew that the Light of God shone into *his* soul and showed *him* the difference between sin and holiness. Christ was in fact *his* present teacher, so that the one great longing of *his* soul was to be delivered from the impurity and power of sin and to become like Christ." This, of course, is a *mild* type of mysticism. It does not suggest a way of negation, but it does nevertheless imply that the heart of religion, that is religion with Christ at its center, is a personal experience of the life of God in the life of man, and that through this direct contact comes a radical transformation of life.

I must make one more excursion into the domain of my youthful ideas, though I know how easily this sort of thing can be overdone, like reporting the bright say-

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ings of a first-born child. The one other point which I want to recover for the light it throws on my stock of intellectual interests at this time is my emphasis, at the beginning of my career, on divine *immanence*—the creative Spirit of God at work in the world—as contrasted with the *transcendence of God*. I had thoroughly outgrown the sky-god conception, the absentee deity of the eighteenth century, which ought to have died with Ptolemaic astronomy, and I was captivated with the idea of a resident, permeative divine Spirit working within the world and within the life of man. I interpreted this view that first summer in an article on "Christian Thought in the Early Greek Church." All my reading and thinking had been carrying me in this direction, especially the poets whom I most loved, Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Tennyson, and of course my two favorite writers at the time, Carlyle and Emerson, went in the same direction. I had already discovered the remarkable interpretation of early Christianity by the great Greek Fathers of the Church, and their message admirably fitted my outlook on religious thought. I saw, however, even then, though by no means clearly enough, the danger of *identifying* God with the world and of so vapoing off into a thin pantheism which blurs the moral issues of life and misses the full significance of personality both in God and in



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man. I knew even then that transcendence is as essential for a God of spiritual reality as immanence is, but I did not yet know how adequately to hold fast to the one without losing the other. That has always been one of man's deepest problems.

It is evident, too, that at this stage I was more concerned to interpret the inward life than I was to face the tasks of the outward world in which I lived. I showed the tendency, so likely to appear in the period of youth, of dwelling on abstract principles and of assuming that if they were sufficiently emphasized and interpreted they would spontaneously create their own concrete world of realities! The trouble is that in this early stage of life, few of us have wide and rich enough experiences to move easily and freely in the realm of the concrete, and it is always easier to take refuge in "the glorious general" than it is to come down to the earth and deal wisely with "the specific instance." Hard facts and unescapable situations were, however, all the time compelling me to climb down out of the comfortable sycamore tree of abstract ideas and face what was to be done down here on the ground level.

It was at this time that my preaching, for I often preached at this period, began to take on a simpler and more practical character. I had previously inclined to be abstract and theoretical, as, once more, young per-

sons are almost bound to be, while they are accumulating experience and background. I usually had many young students in the groups where I did most of my speaking. I quickly entered into sympathy with their difficulties and problems and I soon learned how to interpret life in vital ways to meet their practical spiritual needs. I learned very early that a preaching tone and clerical manner defeat the main end one has in view. I made it my constant aim to be perfectly simple and natural, to speak as if I were talking to a single individual, to whom I was interpreting some vital issue that deeply concerned his life. My preaching gradually took the form of a quiet persuasive talk rather than a formal preachment, and I learned never to forget the children who might be sitting in front of me. I have discovered that if one secures the interest and attention of the children he is pretty sure to have the whole congregation with him. But that means at once that he must not remain in the dry, refined air of the abstract; he must make many excursions into the warm and intimate world of the concrete. He must frequently use the language of what a friend of mine calls "sense impressions," which means only that his listeners must *see and feel* what he is talking about.

I got one amusing reaction to my quiet method of preaching. I went, in these early days, to a meeting in

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the West where the preaching was usually very "lively." I spoke in my accustomed way with what I hoped was "persuasive calm." A member of the meeting who felt that good preaching must be physically *dynamic*, made this comment on my effort. "You can imagine," he said, "how much 'unction' there was to his sermon when I tell you that he rose to speak with the tail of his coat folded under, and he spoke thirty-five minutes without shaking down the fold."

I had always in my early youth been brought up in the faith that preaching ought to be spontaneous and unpremeditated. This view was not a direct result of the early Quaker doctrine of the inward Light; it was an outcome of Quietism in the eighteenth century. It was the essence of Quietism that the "human creature" was spiritually bankrupt and could make no effective contribution by human effort. The mind must be entirely "emptied" of all its accumulations through learning and through experience and become "a passive instrument" of a communication given directly from above. To use the language of Quietism, the message, if it is to be spiritual, must be "pure," that is, unmixed with anything of "the human creature." On this basis, the individual person who brings the message is, literally, "an instrument" used by a higher Power, as a musician would use a violin, or as a writer would use a typing

machine. This line of reasoning bore all the marks of the sharp "dualism" of the eighteenth century. It grew out of the conception of God as entirely sundered and separated from man, as completely beyond and other than the finite. It was the doctrine of "transcendence" pushed to its legitimate conclusion. It made ministry unnatural and of a stereotyped form, and it inclined the thoughtful youth to reflect that if many of the messages he heard were direct divine "communications" it seemed odd that God had so little to communicate and that it was put in such queer phrases!

That theory of supernatural ministry was doomed as soon as the view of divine immanence took the place of extreme transcendence. A person under the immanent view came to be thought of now no longer as a passive "instrument," transmitting a pure, divine "communication," "given" to him outright, but rather as an "organ" of vital coöperation by which, when the person was touched by inspiration, something more than an ordinary human effort might emerge. "Emptiness," "hollowness," "vacancy" was no longer an ideal for ministry; but rather "preparation of life" for coöperation with God, was the essential thing. The richer the life, the greater the inward depth, the more abundant the stock of experience and the accumulation of truth, the more effective the ministry would be likely to be, as can

well be imagined. That change of attitude quite obviously marked a revolution in Quaker circles and it won its place only slowly. The original Quaker insight that much preaching in the churches was perfunctory, wooden, "man-made" and professional was, and still remains, a true insight. Those early Quakers proposed to "famish" their contemporaries "from words," as George Fox put it at his famous haystack meeting. They wisely believed that a new kind of preparation, quite different from the systems in vogue in the theological seminaries, was essential for genuine spiritual ministry. It must come out of life, not out of stuffing from books. It must be fresh and creative, not "got up" in professional fashion and "turned on" the audience, as one turns a hose on a garden. It must be "in the life," not artificially contrived "to fill time."

The Quaker group silence, the coöperative teamwork of the entire assembly, the expectant hush, the sense of divine presence, the faith that God and man can come into mutual and reciprocal correspondence, tend to heighten the spiritual quality of the person who rises in that kind of atmosphere to speak. But that group situation, important as it is, will not work the miracle of producing a message for the hour in a person who is sterile and has nothing to say. Even the miracle of feeding the multitude in Galilee needed at least a



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nucleus of loaves and fishes to start with. Vital ministry is not abstract and doctrinal, it is charged with insight for the meaning and significance of *life*. It answers back to specific human need. It "speaks to the condition" of souls. It correlates with concrete reality. It sets hearts beating. It quickens drooping spirits. It restores waning faith. It fortifies the wills of those who hear it. It makes the world look different. That means that it must *come out of life* and, if it is to have value, it must *refresh life*.

That kind of ministry obviously must be *prepared* for. The kind of preparation will be very varied, and each person will need to settle for himself how *he* will prepare for the great business in hand after he has become convinced that God intends him to be an organ of His Spirit. One of my beloved Harvard professors who was, in his earlier years, a noted preacher, used to prepare his sermon during the week and then read it Saturday evening to his wife. As he finished the manuscript he would lay it on the table and say modestly to his companion, "My dear, I do not see how that sermon can possibly do anybody any harm!" What this good man, who expressed himself so humbly, really expected was that much good to many lives would come from that sermon of his.

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I may perhaps finish this chapter with a very brief account of how I used to prepare myself for this spiritual task at the beginning of my ministry. I have never believed that great ministry would come by a miracle out of an empty mind, any more than George Fox could get wisdom out of the "empty, hollow casks" that he consulted in his quest. But at the same time I have always had a kind of horror of artificially constructed sermons that gasp and wheeze with dullness of life. They may not "do any harm" that could be observed, but they give the impression to the thoughtful soul that the vitality and power of Christianity have somehow been left out of the story. A little boy, who muddled the text, reported a similar situation with the words: "many were cold, but few were frozen."

I decided from the first never to *write* a sermon, and I have always been resolved throughout my life not to preach in any case unless I felt profoundly impressed at the time that I had in my soul a living message for the particular occasion in hand. My method, formed in this period, was to get, sometime during the week, the earlier the better, a flash of insight into some significant issue of life. Sometimes "the flash" came while I was reading an important book, for I always had one or more such books in hand. Sometimes it came while I

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was out walking alone, for I was much given to walking in those days. Sometimes it came in my periods of silent meditation during the day, or just before I fell asleep at night. When once I had what seemed like a real "lead" I let it slowly develop, as it was pretty sure to do. Fitting ideas would accumulate around the live center; it would grow and expand. My reading almost always would feed more material into it. Illustrations would suggest themselves, but they were never used unless they actually *illustrated* the point at issue. My memory was stocked with poetry, and appropriate passages would spontaneously present themselves, but unless they clearly *fitted* I refused to use them. So gradually, day by day, the tissue of the living *structure* formed. I did not usually have it put into literary form, that is, into specific words. I had the ordered ideas, the continuity of development, the line of thought with suggestive illustration material in mind, but the expression, the creative work, was done at the moment when I spoke it.

But after all this preparation, thus inwardly performed, I did not preach that sermon until the time manifestly came for it. I had to feel a sort of inward "click," or better still a kindling spark that lighted the wood on the altar before I could stand and deliver. The important point to note is that I began in early life

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to prepare in inward quiet, to mature my thought without writing it and to speak with spontaneity, though the spontaneity *was* in some sense, prepared in advance.

## CHAPTER IV

### OPEN DOOR OR IMPENETRABLE WALL?

IT soon became evident to me that there was no *future* for a journal of the type of *The Friends' Review*. Its sphere of life lay in a small midway area between two extremes. Each extreme had its own journal interpreting the ideals of a well-defined religious position. Occupying the neutral territory in the middle area, I was always seen in bad perspective. To the extreme conservatives I was always seen as belonging far over on the fringes of the left. To the "revivalist" Friends of the West I was counted as a member and defender of the right wing. For neither wing could there be a legitimate middle area. Not to be *for* was to be *against*.

In vain I improved the form and the quality of the periodical—the subscription list remained static. I secured excellent writers. I had the well-known "stars" on my list of contributors. I steadily improved the quality of my own work. At the New Year I transformed the old-fashioned make-up of the journal and came out with a very attractive format. I mailed five thousand extra copies to a selected mailing list. It was mainly



lost effort. I kept my old subscribers, but I added very few new ones. The lines were formed and the territory beyond my intermediate zone was occupied and there was an impenetrable wall around the little zone which to those outside it, was a kind of "no-man's land," never to be occupied. The assets in my bank were "frozen." No one had ears to hear a person who was not a champion of the party issues of the well-defined party position. In this situation I decided to make a bold venture, and to attempt what seemed at the time the *impossible*. Sir James Barrie in his Rectoral Address to the students of St. Andrews University said: "I know that your God is watching to see whether you are adventurous." Barrie's words express the way I always used to feel about the adventurous quality of life.

My plan, it appeared to be a dream, was to merge *The Friends' Review* of the East and the *Christian Worker* of the West into a single religious journal and to launch an effort to raise the whole tone and level of Quakerism of the progressive or moving type. Nobody believed that the *Christian Worker* would for a moment consider merging and losing its identity, but it did consider it when I broached the project to those who were responsible for its existence. Two men at the time largely controlled its destiny and they were tired of carrying the heavy burden of its financial support on

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their shoulders. James Wood of Mount Kisco, New York, was my constant helper in the negotiations. His diplomatic wisdom and his wide vision of possibilities were of immense importance and together we overcame obstacles which appeared to be insurmountable. "Faith," William James once said, "is the sense of the exceedingness of the possible over the real," and we worked on undefeated because we saw "the exceedingness of the possible over the real." We of the East and they of the West talked over together all the issues involved with utmost sincerity. I made it clearly evident to Friends from the West that I could not take the position which the *Christian Worker* had been holding, and I pointed out that my own views had been made plain in my two volumes of the *Friends' Review*, but that I was ready to widen out my interests and my sympathies, and to make an honest endeavor to understand the mind and spirit of the great body of Friends in the Western meetings and to interpret for them and for everybody who would read the new periodical, a fresh and vital type of Christianity, inwardly mystical and outwardly socially constructive.

Our little group of Eastern and Western Friends in conference on the project came to a completely harmonious agreement. It should be added that the men who were behind *The Friends' Review* in Philadelphia

and responsible for its life and who supported me, unanimously agreed to let it die to its old existence that it might live a broader life in a new form. It was decided that the two old journals were to cease with the issues of July 5, 1894, and that on the 19th of July a new periodical to be named *The American Friend* was to commence its career. I was to be its editor, with six field editors from various parts of the country to assist me in collecting news, though I was to have complete responsibility for the editorial position of the new paper. I said in my first editorial: "The religious journal that is to become a power for good must do more than reiterate current beliefs and universally accepted views; it must be an educational force, a help to spiritual growth, marking a continual advance in thought. *It must not be narrowly bound to expound the traditions of a section, a party, or a creed.*" That meant, as plainly as I could say it, that I was not expecting to follow beaten tracks, or to say smooth and familiar things. I intended to lead forward to new goals. I promised no goods which I could not deliver, and I then, as always before and since, refused to have my hands tied, or my spirit bound by pledges or reservations. I certainly was limited in insight as to the full significance of the path I was entering and still very youthful, with ill-digested ideas. It was another instance

of going out, like the man from Ur of the Chaldees, without knowing the full extent of the *whither*. I knew well enough that I was going "a way I had not gone hitherto." I was eager for the adventure, but I had little forecast of the roughness of the journey, or of the hidden bumps.

When I began volume one of *The American Friend* in 1894, the vast majority of my readers and the no less vast majority of Christians in America generally believed in the transcendence of God in as undisturbed a way as John Wesley had done in the eighteenth century, when it was universally believed. They accepted the popular view that the world, including man, had come into being by a creative act which had occurred at a specific time. The world was finished; man was made. They held the view that the Scriptures were the infallible and authoritative revelation of spiritual truth to man for all ages and generations, and that without this supernatural revelation truth could not ever have been discovered by man. They were fixed and settled in the opinion that man had been "ruined by the fall," and rendered incapable of spiritual recovery by any human processes, and that in this dire extremity of incapacity a way of salvation had been provided by a *vicarious atonement*, which offered the only possible way—the divine plan—for man's salvation.

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These five doctrinal positions formed the central nucleus of Calvinistic theology. Calvin himself would have added as essential to the faith the doctrine of foreordination and election. The evangelical revival originated by the Wesleys turned away from the election doctrine. In other words it was Arminian. That revised form of evangelical Christianity, shorn of the election doctrine, profoundly influenced the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church in America in the nineteenth century and eventually all the other churches in England and America. With the revival movement in the 'seventies in America there came thus with refreshed enthusiasm a restoration of the main tenets of Calvinism.

The most striking single feature of the birth of Quakerism in the seventeenth century had been its revolt from Calvinistic theology. At every point George Fox broke with that system of doctrine. He boldly called the statements of his time man-made "notions," and he thought of the entire doctrinal structure as a new attempt at "Babel-building," a new ladder to reach heaven. Fox proposed a way of life in the Spirit to take the place of these complicated ladders of doctrine which seemed to him to be based not on experience but on texts and logic.

Nevertheless, it was Calvin and not Fox who was



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dominant, even among Quakers, in America in 1894. A prominent Christian thinker in that decade, reviewing the religious condition of the denominational churches in America at the close of the century, concluded that "even among the Quakers Calvin has conquered Fox and defeated him." To a wider extent than one would have supposed possible, this estimate was historically sound. Quakerism was shot through with Calvinistic doctrine. The Friends themselves were, for the most part, unaware of the revolutionary changes which had been going on within their far-flung membership. They were not historical-minded and no historian had yet traced the slow transformations through which the Society of Friends had passed in two centuries. They read Fox and Barclay, but they read their own views back into these creative leaders, somewhat as Calvin had read his views back into the Epistles of St. Paul. It was perfectly easy to be found holding the views which Fox had denounced and at the same time to be claiming loyalty to Fox!

To see how easy it was to do that, one has only to read "The Declaration of Faith" drawn up at the Richmond Conference in 1887, by a group of highly distinguished Friends, led by Joseph Bevan Braithwaite of London. The "Declaration" is strongly Calvinistic,

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both in fiber and color, and it is far removed in tone and quality from the spiritual outlook of the first Friends. The men who did this work in Richmond were genuine disciples of Joseph John Gurney, and they were unconsciously carried along on the lines of thought inaugurated by the Wesleyan Revival of the eighteenth century and taken over by the Anglican-evangelical movement.

The new "revivalist" Quakers of the 'seventies and 'eighties went beyond Gurney and his disciples in their devotion to the theological views under discussion, and they had far less of historical background than Gurney had had a generation before them. There had come an increased emphasis on the magic of "sound" phrases, and on literalism in the interpretation of Scripture. This tendency to literalism brought a widespread revival of the expectation of the second coming of Christ. Readers who lacked critical and historical insight took apocalyptic passages out of their setting and out of their time environment, and read them with narrow literalism as though they were unfulfilled prophecies still to be accomplished in our times. These second-coming expectations, which are still very much alive in some Christian circles, carry with them an extremely pessimistic interpretation of history and of human life, in-

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cluding the belief that the world is bound to grow morally worse and that human efforts for social betterment are doomed to be futile.

There came in, too, with this revival movement, a strong emphasis on what was called "a second experience," often called "sanctification," or "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." It grew out of a limited conception of salvation, thought of as a "transaction" rather than as a "transformation." The first stage in the process was thought of as a legal step, the transaction of "justification," but the "justified" person still lacked "power" to overcome the tendencies to sin in his nature and was likely to "backslide" unless by a new stage he came into an experience of "endowment with power," which would make him victorious over the world, the flesh and the devil, this latter individual being considered unmistakably *real*. The holiness teaching of the period, taken over from Wesley, was crude and artificial, and bore the marks of the eighteenth century. It had emerged out of the fact that salvation itself was too crudely considered through emphasis on *doctrine* rather than on the process of *life* itself. It was thought of in doctrinal terms rather than in vital terms. But the persons who held these views were sincere and honest. They were intensely concerned with these matters, and their convictions were "fiery positive." They believed

that they had recovered the marching power of the early Friends and that they were genuine "George Fox Quakers," even like him, "earthquakers," able to "shake the earth for ten miles around."

Meantime, a new epoch in religion was coming to birth in the world. Another kind of revolution, unique in character, was sweeping on irresistibly. The conquests of science were altering every educated man's outlook. Historical research, including the higher critical study of the books of the Bible, was introducing problems of the profoundest significance. Everybody who knew what was happening in the study of nature saw now that the conclusions of science were not series of happy guesses, they were unescapable facts about the universe verified by a multitude of workers and buttressed by unimpeachable testimony. The laboratories were speaking with an authority which all the workers in all other fields envied. Historical research had succeeded, too, in introducing scientific methods into its field and all the documents out of the far past were subjected now to a merciless scrutiny. Proof that there were in the Bible stages of development from primitive times upward and many levels of civilization with varying degrees of moral and spiritual insight, became as plain as the sun in the sky. Clearly demonstrated also was the fact of the influence of surrounding civiliza-

tions on the formation of the ideas and ideals of Hebrew thought, and every book of the Old Testament revealed the presence of a human factor contributed by the author of it, and by the historical setting, out of which it came.

Already in 1894 the evolutionary theory of man's origin, as presented by Charles Darwin, was thirty-five years old. It had met the criticisms of its early opponents and it had marched steadily on, making converts everywhere among scientists, and it was all the time widening out the scope and extent of its significance. Huxley and Spencer were at the peak of their influence and none of their readers could miss the fact that Christianity was meeting in the theory of cosmic evolution one of its major crises in its long history. The New Testament, meantime, was being put into the same crucible as the Old. The new theories of the origin of the Gospels were emerging and the whole story of primitive Christianity was being rewritten. There was not a single stone in the entire Christian structure that was not submitted to an acid test.

The first book that I read after beginning my editorial labors was the then famous *Lux Mundi*, written by a group of Oxford scholars and divines who accepted without dismay the fact that Christianity must be interpreted so as to meet the verified facts and truths of



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science and history, and who pointed out where some of the adjustments must be made.

English leaders of Christian thought were already well on their way toward a comprehensive insight as to how the revolutionary conclusions of science and historical research were to be met. They were ably feeling their way toward a discovery of what all this meant for the faith of the ages. It is an interesting fact that the English Quakers were among the earliest of the religious bodies in England to face up to these issues in a fearless spirit. In 1895 a conference was held in Manchester, England, at which a calm accounting of spiritual stock was made by leading Friends and a constructive position was taken. It was on this occasion that John Wilhelm Rowntree, then twenty-seven years of age, stood out as the prophet of a new time and was recognized as the leader of the Young Friends of England. The Manchester Conference was followed by a series of Summer Schools for the interpretation of the bearing of science and history upon the message and mission of the Society of Friends in the new age. I shall have more to say of these Summer Schools in a later chapter.

In America the attitude taken toward the new scientific and historical conclusions was a much more timid one than in England. There was widespread fear, and

with the fear there was much confusion of thought. The old-fashioned way of meeting new ideas was frequently resorted to, namely, they were dogmatically declared to be "errors," and denounced as "unsound," and in many cases, as "instigated by Satan." Those who showed a sympathetic attitude toward the new ideas, in very many instances, came under suspicion, were subjected to harsh criticism, had their reputation smirched by suggestion and innuendo, and if they held official positions they were likely to be expelled or demoted. The story of the subtle forms of persecution for heresy in America during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first one of the twentieth is a long and tragic one. It will, fortunately, never be written, but if it were told in full it would powerfully reflect upon the Christianity of that generation.

The method resorted to, as is usually the case, was *obscurantism*, which means a refusal to see, or to admit, the unpleasant facts that threaten disaster to ancient pet doctrines. The persons who discovered the unpleasant facts were slandered, or even blackened. Their conclusions were ridiculed, and the old phrases and doctrines were reasserted with louder emphasis and with increased dogmatism. There were striking psychological illustrations of the devices to which "fear-complexes" will on occasion drive a desperate theologian. The

louder he shouts the more he is really *afraid*, though obviously he is unconscious of his "complex."

Meantime, the laboratories and classrooms of the colleges and universities of the country were demonstrating the newly discovered facts and principles to hosts of sons and daughters who had been nurtured in the old-time faiths. Quite naturally the "authority" of the laboratory, the "authority" of the professor who *demonstrated* the truth of what he was saying, was all the time coming to be the supreme "authority" for these youth all over the country. It was not surprising that when they returned to their homes and found the Sunday school and the minister of the church of their childhood asserting what they knew was not *so*, and attacking in ignorance and with antiquated weapons the discoveries which all the scholars of their university accepted and taught as demonstrated, they revolted from that form of religion or lost their loyalty for the church of their fathers.

Sometimes, no doubt, part of the blame for these tragedies, which fell with devastation on home after home, should be attributed to unwise or even wayward teachers who took pleasure in being destructive. But in the main the real trouble was that the leaders of the Church failed to read the signs of the times, and took the easy course of withdrawing into the forts and

fortresses of obscurantism, defying the onward march of truth—about as effectively as King Canute defied the incoming tide of the ocean. A Brahmin once, who was shown through a microscope how many invisible forms of life he was all the time destroying without knowing that they were there, met the crisis by breaking the microscope and so living happy ever after! That method seems for a moment to stave off the tragedy, but in the end it only accentuates it. There is no fortification that can defend the faith except *truth* openly arrived at. Some day ministers of Christ and spiritual guides of little children will perhaps learn the truth that the eternal laws of the universe, made manifest in the facts of nature, and the actual processes of history, as they go forward on their way are revelations of the will of God and must not be misread or ignored.

I came, then, into this new and expanded editorial task when situations of that sort were at their most acute stage. There was, on the one hand, a strong recrudescence of Calvinism and doctrinal Christianity, and, on the other hand, there were powerfully converging lines of thought, buttressed by unescapable demonstrations, which seemed to threaten the very basic pillars of the Christian faith. The youth of the period were being tossed between Scylla and Charybdis. It will be difficult, perhaps impossible, for my readers living

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now in peace in the lee of the dykes, to realize in any vivid way what it was like to be thrown into that open sea when the euroclydon was in full sweep. It is because only a person who has been through it can tell about it that I am writing this story.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CIRCUIT-RIDER

It was "borne in on my mind," as the old Friends used to say, that if I was to have any creative influence in this crisis of religious thought I must know the people with whom I was to work and they must know me. In the Middle West I was often pictured in imagination as an ancient Friend, in a "shad-bellied" coat and beaver hat, with a somewhat medieval mental outlook, mainly concerned in preserving the *status quo*—in short, a very conservative-minded man. This distorted image was due to what I have already called "the bad perspective," in which one who holds a position somewhere near the middle is seen from each extreme.

I have always maintained that the first step in any campaign, where important issues are at stake, is the cultivation of an "understanding mind" on the part of those who are involved in the campaign. The only genuine diplomacy is that in which every "move" is open and plain to all parties concerned. The phrase "all the cards are on the table" was not coined, I presume, at a prayer meeting, but it expresses exactly the right

approach to all vital issues. One of the most important aspects in all such matters is of course the personal coefficient. There must be an opportunity not only to look in the face of the man who proposes to undertake to deal with sacred matters, but there must as well be a chance to look into his heart and mind, and to "search him with a candle," or, in modern parlance, with an electric torch or with the headlight of a locomotive.

I have always been convinced that *truth* is not often advanced by religious controversy and that other ways of advancing it than bitter contention must be sought and found. One difficulty about controversies is that the one-sided contentions in the controversy are likely to make each party more deeply entrenched than before in its own position. Every argument proposed on one side suggests a counter-argument on the other side. The mind is all the time occupied, not with the discovery of truth, but with a way to answer and combat the argument of the opponent. There are many kinds of violence besides the violence of cannon, shot and shell, and one age-old form of violence is that of trying to force religious ideas upon unwilling minds and to compel a mind to arrive at a conclusion without having had the educational steps that make the conclusion *real*. I was resolved to carry the ideals of *non-violence* into all

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my methods of presenting religion, and that meant that every step of advance must be one of understanding.

This method of contact is another instance, on a new scale, of passing from the abstract to the concrete. So long as an editorial writer belongs only in the abstract genus of editor-in-general and is conceived only in imagination, his words are almost sure to be misread, or at least they will be colored by the distorted image which the reader has of the writer. I was afraid some readers might even go beyond the image of "shad-bellied coat" and picture me as an editor who had "cloven feet and horns," not to say "with a swinging tail." I wanted them to start with "sense impressions" rather than with imagined concepts.

I resolved, therefore, to take up the burden of "itinerant visiting," or what the early Methodists called "circuit-riding." It was, furthermore, just as important for me to understand the minds of my readers as it was for them to search my mind. We are very prone to gather people up under "blanket" labels, to estimate them and especially to condemn them, in terms of a slogan or a rubric, as though all human varieties in a given region could be put into a single bracket and ticketed off with a sweeping judgment. I knew better, and I was resolved on my part to have "sense impressions" of the people I expected to work with, or,

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better still, to have life contacts with them, the touch and feel of hand and spirit.

My first "break" into the so-called West—what people in the far East call the "West"—came in the winter of 1893-94, when the idea was first dawning in my mind that the two Quaker periodicals might be merged into one. I met on this first trip, which was severely limited, the leading Friends of Cincinnati, Ohio, and of Richmond, Indiana, and some of the near-by towns. I found these people strangely like "home people," the people I knew and loved in the East. I formed at that time friendships that have lasted throughout my life and I saw everywhere the possibilities of new dawns and new sunrises for spiritual Christianity.

I visited Earlham College for the first time on this "circuit" and gave my first lecture to its students, with Dante's *Divine Comedy* for my subject. I was charmed, as I always have been, by the beauty of its campus and by the fine quality of its students. Here began a contact with Quaker colleges, other than my own, which has been an interesting feature of my life, a contact of the type which was later to widen out and include a very large list of colleges and universities in America. The most significant Friend at that moment in Indiana was Allen Jay. He was seriously handicapped by hav-

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ing had from birth a very defective palate, which made his speech noticeably peculiar. So remarkable, however, was his personality and so strikingly gifted was his spirit that he had become one of the leading Christian preachers in the State of Indiana, and in the narrower circle among Friends he was known and loved everywhere. He had an ever-expanding mind and a richness of life which kept him fresh and youthful to the end of his days, and he never ceased to grow both intellectually and spiritually as long as he was on the earth. He threw in all his wisdom and all his ripe influence to back up and support the work to which I had set my hand.

My next extensive circuit trip was taken in the summer and autumn of 1894. It included Iowa, Illinois and both western and eastern Indiana. A quinquennial educational conference for Friends in all parts of America was held in Oskaloosa, Iowa, that summer. Isaac Sharpless, Professor George A. Barton of Bryn Mawr College, and I were delegates to it from our two colleges. These conferences, coming as they did once in five years in different sections of the country at some educational center, were important occasions for reviewing the intellectual progress that had been made during the five-year period, and they gave forward-looking persons among Friends an opportunity to inter-



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pret the significance of the new discoveries that were being made for the religious life and thought of the times.

One of the gravest difficulties confronting a religious body, which has idealistic aims, is the tendency for the membership to drop to the level of the local environment and to conform to the popular standards of the region. The children of the community all go to the same school and imbibe the same set of ideas. The Sunday schools of the given region use pretty much the same lesson helps and tend to make the plastic minds of the little folks conform to the same dull patterns. If a larger vision is to be imparted and a broader range of life is to be discovered, there must be provision made for the coming in of more inspiring literature, and occasions made for the visits of constructive leaders of thought and interpreters of life. Some such service as that, these educational conferences endeavored to promote.

This conference gave me an excellent chance to meet the leaders of the Society of Friends from the West and the East and the central regions of the country. Even more important, however, were the events that followed it. I remained for some time in Iowa, saw Friends in their homes, studied the work of Penn College located in Oskaloosa, and, most important of all, I attended

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Iowa Yearly Meeting. A Quaker Yearly Meeting is the annual gathering of large numbers of the membership in a State, or of an even larger division of the country, such for example as that for New England. There were in the State of Iowa at the time about thirteen thousand Friends and something like one thousand of them came to the assembly that summer. Every part of the Quaker population in the State was represented and all the influential leaders were there. I had many opportunities to address the meetings, but what was more to the point for my purpose was that I spent all my free time coming into close and friendly relations with the individuals who composed the group, and when the Yearly Meeting ended, I had a long list of Friends to leave behind, friends for the rest of my life, many of whom were ready to go with me on the lines I proposed to take. It was interesting to note how effective with the Iowa farmers were my rustic illustrations drawn from rural life and experience in New England. I have always had a large stock of such illustrative material stored away in my memory, and these incidents are apt to come surging up spontaneously to fit a situation in hand, though as I have already said I do not use an illustration unless it actually *illustrates* and clarifies the situation, so that when they are used they count for something. It was obvious that

these homely incidents helped to drive home the truths I was endeavoring to present.

Another great Yearly Meeting followed this one. It was "Western Yearly Meeting," held at Plainfield, Indiana, and included the Friends of Illinois and western Indiana, being of about the same size in number as the one in Iowa. When that was over I attended a similar gathering, though a distinctly larger one, at Richmond, where "Indiana Yearly Meeting" is held. It was composed of almost twenty thousand Friends, living in eastern Indiana and western Ohio. There were at this period about thirty thousand Friends in the entire State of Indiana, which was the largest single group of Friends to be found anywhere in the world. In each one of the two gatherings in Indiana I had experiences and opportunities similar to those in Iowa. I found throughout the Middle West a much larger nucleus of solid and "weighty" Friends than persons in the East had been inclined to suppose. The large proportion of the membership was no doubt rural, persons who lived on farms and who did not travel far afield from home, but even so they had good common-school education, with here and there a college graduate among them, while the democratic character of the Quaker meetings in which they had grown up had given them a valuable spiritual training. Here once more, however, there was

always a tendency to sag down to the level of the environment and to conform to existing lines of thought and prevailing religious habits. I returned from this wide circuit of travel and intercourse, confident that there were large numbers of Friends in all parts of the country I had visited who were ready to go forward if there was anyone who could with wisdom and insight show them the way.

It is difficult to speak adequately of the hospitality conferred upon me in all parts of the country on these travels. St. Paul exhorted the early Christians to excel in hospitality and the writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* urges that his readers should be zealous to entertain strangers, for they may prove to be "unexpected angels." My hosts usually treated me as though they still thought that there was some possibility that the visitor might turn out to be "an angel unawares." In any case I can testify with a loud voice that hospitality in America is not a lost art. Even in homes of seeming limitation and poverty I have again and again found an abounding spirit of hospitality.

It was no less certainly evident to a visitor that there were many doctrinally minded persons intrenched in a settled theological position and possessed of an infallible attitude of mind, who would never budge a jot from what was nominated in their theological bond.

One could see at half a glance that any prospect of advance was to be met by a determined resistance, that any march forward was to have a strong counter-march toward the rear. It was evident, too, that the new type of Quaker meeting with a pastor and a fixed program was not to be quickly dislodged and that probably the old type of Quaker meeting without preparation or leadership would never return in its original form, in many parts of the country. But I came back convinced that, with enlarged understanding, with patience of spirit, with wise leadership, with souls sensitive to divine guidance, and with constant interchange of thought and contact of life, a new spiritual epoch might be possible in America.

This extensive visit may be taken as a sample of what happened every year for the next decade or more. I traveled, on the average in America, nearly ten thousand miles each year. I kept enlarging the circle and also re-covering the old ground. North Carolina, Maryland, New York, New England, Ohio, Canada, Kansas, Nebraska, California, Oregon—a catalogue which sounds like a Walt Whitman poem—saw me, many of the regions frequently, swinging around the circle and leaving no opportunity unused for enlarging contacts and for increasing the spirit of understanding. I came to know personally almost all Friends in America, even



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the children, and very nearly all of them attentively heard me interpret my views of life. Wherever I went I felt a breath of love and affection meet me. There was enough criticism, opposition and disapproval to keep me humble, but the amazing thing was the wave of love that met me, as I went about from place to place.

In all my travels and in my lines of work and in my various activities I made no distinction between types or divisions of Friends. I went with the same sense of fellowship to one group as to another. I was determined to *understand* them, to discover their aims and aspirations and to see how much spiritual quality they preserved. From the first I went with perfect ease and freedom to the meetings and gatherings of the so-called "Hicksite" Friends at the time when the "chasm" between them and the conservative orthodox seemed as deep and unbridgeable as the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. Fortunately I was born and nurtured in a section of the country where there had never been a "Hicksite" separation. I had formed none of that habit of mind which naturally sees "chasms" between groups. I could from the first with comfortable ease treat all persons as "humans" and not as members of a "dangerous sect." I found once more that blanket phrases coined in times of theological dissension had almost no mean-

ing when one came to deal with individual persons. Each person had his own faith, his own way of life, his own peculiar ideals and hopes, which ran far above the slogans by which groups were named. But the division "groups" themselves, even when taken at their best estimate, were too limited and narrow. There was so much essential truth out beyond their borders, which they hardly suspected or recognized. And yet moving in fellowship with all, and being completely identified with none, was not an easy rôle.

I have just re-read a severe letter which I received in my early period from a prominent Friend in the East, condemning me for going to a "Hicksite" meeting where the published account indicated that I had spoken in friendly fashion without any implication of disapproval of the persons with whom I was meeting. Such letters dogged my track, and it was regarded by my correspondents as perversity in me that I should address "misguided groups" without warning them of their waywardness and without imparting to them the true panacea for their troubles. I was quite naturally in danger of seeming to be "all things to all men," to have no eternal convictions of my own and to fluctuate, like a blown thistledown, from one sectarian group to another. It was easy enough to see me as a "trimmer," and to assume that I was cultivating "popularity."

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There were, no doubt, those who thought so and said so. But those who knew intimately and from the inside, felt otherwise. My lines of thought and my direction of life did not wobble or waver back and forth. My position, whenever I interpreted it, was downright and straightforward. I did not logroll or barter. I did not blow hot and cold. I did, however, try to understand and to be understood, and I had the utmost confidence that a spirit of simplicity and sincerity would in the end win its way triumphantly.

I have always been fond of the illustrative incident which came to me from my old Harvard friend, Charles Carroll Everett. When he was a little boy he heard that there was to be an eclipse of the sun and he took advantage of the opportunity by selling tickets to all his boy friends to see it in the Everett's backyard. The boys paid their dimes and then discovered that they could have seen the eclipse just as well outside the fence as inside it. It is usually so, too, with theological fences, at least with the artificially constructed ones.

Meantime, and quite unexpectedly, a door opened very wide for service in England. From the first *The* (London) *Friend* reprinted many of my editorials. As soon as I began to write books (of which I shall speak later) they received favorable notice and wide circulation among English Friends and others abroad. For the

first ten years of this period my books generally had a warmer reception and larger sales in England than in America. Two years after *The American Friend* was launched, two of my friends, James Wood and David Scull, arranged for me to attend London Yearly Meeting (1896) and to have an opportunity to visit extensively among English and Irish Friends and their meetings.

I had to carry on my editorial writing as I traveled, and the labor was decidedly strenuous, but the contacts, the fresh insights, the stimulus and inspiration were extremely rich and memorable. Some of the rarest friendships of my life date from that journey, and then for the first time I saw with my eyes and felt with my spirit what a remarkable spiritual body in the world this group of twenty thousand united English Friends really was. It would be difficult to imagine a more generous welcome than I received in English homes and English meetings. There is a prevailing tradition that the English people are cold and restrained and that hospitality does not come easily or naturally to them. I found the tradition falsified at every turn. It seemed as though I had the door key to everybody's house. In spite of the foreignness of my accent and the peculiarity of my speech, which "bewrayed" me as American, I was listened to with attention, and I felt that quiet and un-

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spoken response which is far more comforting to a speaker than are effusive words.

I spent some memorable days, on this visit, with Dr. Thomas Hodgkin and his family in the keep of Bamborough Castle in Northumberland, where they were living at the time. I went with this famous historian to Lindisfarne, to visit parts of the Great Wall, and to see a number of other historic places in the life of England. I spent a night, not to be forgotten, in Swarthmoor Hall in the Lake District, and here felt as though I were baptized into fellowship with George Fox, whose home it had often been. I felt from the time of this early visit that English Friends had found the forward track in the confusions and mazes of the time.

This was the beginning of a long series of English visits. My next visit was in 1901 to give courses of lectures at the great Scarborough Summer School which proved to be one of the most memorable occasions of my life. I lived during the four weeks in the home of John Wilhelm Rowntree at near-by Scalby. In our free time, especially in the evenings, we planned our life work together for a joint interpretation of mysticism and Quakerism, he to specialize in the latter field and I in the former.

I had an experience one Sunday afternoon at Scarborough which has always helped me to understand



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how difficult it is to estimate the effect of a public message by one's own sense of its success or failure at the time of delivery. The most important address that had been arranged for me was the one for this particular Sunday afternoon. It had been widely advertised, a large company gathered, and I had carefully prepared for the occasion. But I had no flow of speech, no ease of delivery. Nothing I had prepared seemed to fit. The whole undertaking appeared to me to go awry, to be a failure and a botch, though I was dimly conscious that something beyond the poor words was breaking through. As we walked away I turned to Rendel Harris who had been sitting by me and said, "Rendel, that is the poorest address I ever gave in my life." With what seemed small comfort, he replied, "Oh, it wasn't as bad as that!" It turned out, strangely enough, that no single address that I have ever given has produced more significant results. Of no other message I have ever spoken have so many persons told me later, some of them years afterwards, that it was a turning point and marked an epoch in their lives. It is, therefore, evidently more important to have something "break through" from beyond than it is to have the prepared speech come off smoothly as planned.

There is an amusing story told of an old Friend, too settled in his ways of thought to adjust to new ideas,

who was much disturbed by what he heard at these early English Summer Schools. Coming back, grieved in spirit, he rose in meeting the following Sunday morning and warned his hearers of the dangers of doubt and unsettlement, which he illustrated by an incident: "I knew a young man," he related, "who became unsettled with doubts, and even disbelieved that Jonah was actually swallowed by a great fish. Well, this young man invited a friend to go out with him in a sailboat. There came up a sudden squall and the young man who doubted was drowned." After sitting uneasily for a little while, this sensitively honest old Friend rose again and said: "Friends, for *the honor of truth* I think I ought to say that the other young man was drowned also!"

In 1902, shortly before my marriage to Elizabeth Bartram Cadbury, a Friend came over from Birmingham, England, to bring me in person the invitation to become the Principal of Woodbrooke Settlement for religious study which was at the time being founded at Selly Oak, near Birmingham. My wife and I were further invited to go to England that summer, make a study of the situation on the spot, meet those who were most concerned for the project before coming to a decision which was bound to be a momentous one. It proved to be one of the two or three most difficult decisions I have ever made. I felt in spirit more deeply identified

with English Quakerism than with any other branch of organized Christianity in the world, *and yet* all my roots were in other soil, my central task in life was plainly enough in America and my educational sphere at Haverford held me almost like a manifest destiny. President Isaac Sharpless, with his usual delicate tact and wisdom, discussed with me the pros and cons, talked over the possibilities that opened for a career of life and service in each of the two fields, but utterly refrained from holding out any promise of increased salary as an inducement to turn the scale. As soon, however, as I decided to remain in America, as I did, he raised my salary to match what I had been offered in England, with a promise of more to follow, and a notable friend of mine and of the college gave an endowment to the college to make this enlarged salary possible.

In 1903 I went again to England, accompanied by my wife, to take part in an extended Summer School, which was to mark the opening of Woodbrooke. It was during this absence from home that my little boy of eleven went from this life into an invisible one, which altered everything on earth for me, an event for which I had in some sense been fortified and prepared just before it happened, by a remarkable conscious experience of being brought up into direct contact with God.

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This experience came suddenly, spontaneously. There were no stages of ascent, no steps of preparation for it. I heard no words. I saw no light. I was impressed only with a sense of invasion, a new tide of life coming in as from some mystic ocean, and with it I had the consciousness of being taken up into boundless Love.

Those weeks in England that summer remain in memory as something wholly unique. I felt divided in being, with an essential part of myself irrevocably gone and yet with an extraordinary increment of life and power such as I had not felt before. The course of lectures I gave on this occasion was, I think, the most important course I have ever given. It later formed the substance of the book, entitled *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, which embodied my philosophy of life up to that time. Even more significant were the brief and more or less spontaneous addresses I gave at different times and places, for, once more, something from beyond seemed on occasion to "break through" and get expressed. I formed this summer a new group of friends who strikingly raised the whole significance of life for me. Philip H. Wicksteed, the great Dante scholar and translator of Aristotle, was one of the shining names in the new list. On the steamer coming home I sat at the table and took my walks with T. Rhondda Williams, one of the most effective English preachers of the period, and a truly

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great interpreter of life. He entered into my state of mind with remarkable insight and spoke to my condition as only one who has himself suffered can do. We have had many meetings since and have through the intervening years been fast friends.

In the summer, both of 1905 and 1906, I was in England again, lecturing at Summer Schools—the famous ones at Street (1905) and at Bakewell (1906). We also had in 1905 a small and intimate summer group at Scalby, profoundly penetrated with the spirit of John Wilhelm Rowntree, whose body, no longer able to minister to his spirit, had been laid that spring in the little meeting-house yard at Haverford. A part of the time of that 1905 visit was spent laying plans for carrying on the historical work which had been begun by John Wilhelm. His father, Joseph Rowntree, with his brother Seebohm and his wonderful cousin Joshua, a saint if there ever was one, William Charles Braithwaite, banker and historian combined with many other qualities, Joan Mary Fry, highly gifted daughter of Sir Edward Fry, A. Neave Brayshaw, a leader of youth, and a little group of other intimate relatives and friends met with me in John Wilhelm's unique library at Scalby, to plan, if possible, for the continuation of the work which death had so sadly interrupted. It was decided to merge my projected studies in mysticism with the plan



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for a history of Quakerism. The completed series of volumes was to cover the history of the mystical-spiritual movements which prepared the way for the birth of Quakerism in the seventeenth century and to tell the story of its rise and its development up to the present century. I was asked to be the editor of the Historical Series, and it was arranged for William Charles Braithwaite to deal with the beginnings and early periods of Quakerism and for me to write the background movements and the history of Quakerism from 1725 onward, both in England and America. I consequently returned home that summer with a project of added literary labor which was to occupy the next sixteen years of my life.

I have casually referred to my second marriage in 1902, as though it were merely one event among the many events which came in succession. But it was very far from an "ordinary" happening. Every aspect of my life was touched and transformed by that initiation into a new and sacred fellowship. We promised in simple Quaker marriage custom to be "faithful and loving," but we little knew what a wealth of tacit commitments lay hidden under those three explicit words of promise. How little of life, especially of married life, can be pattern-stamped and groomed into line by explicit agreements in advance. Every crisis of life brings situations

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which could not be anticipated or planned for beforehand, and for which there could be no contractual arrangements. Every occasion of our lives has brought into play the unformulated and tacit commitments which only love can supply. One of the mysteries of love is the untracked way by which it leads a man and his wife on into steadily richer coöperation, as the two persons, without ever agreeing to do so, constantly act *true to character*, the trends of which could be known, and in our case were known, in advance. There is an ancient ritual in which the bride and groom offer the unique prayer, "May we two live our lives so happily together that God may enjoy our union of heart and spirit with each other." What a sacrament that love would be which could bring joy to God!

## CHAPTER VI

### A RELIGION OF LIFE

I WAS confronted all the time in my editorial work with the fact that my readers, speaking generally, thought of Christianity exclusively as a religion which insured salvation, and "salvation" for most minds then meant the attainment of heaven after death—"I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies." There was to these minds, furthermore, a definite "plan or scheme of salvation" expressed in doctrinal form, the acceptance of which was essential to "salvation." One of my watchful critics, disturbed over my emphasis on the Incarnation in Christ as the revelation of a way of life, wrote to say: "Jesus Christ was sent into the world *for no other purpose* but to be offered as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world by shedding his blood on Calvary." That brief letter reveals admirably the state of mind of hosts of my readers. Atonement through Christ's blood was the heart and center of "the plan of salvation" which for them constituted Christianity.

Another letter from an outstanding man of wide influence calls the Atonement "that simple, clear and

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Great Transaction" by which "One suffered in His own innocent person the penalty due for our transgressions." The emphasis is put on "transaction," spelled with a capital and on the "penalty" for sin, rather than on the importance of *transformation of life*. A third critic complained that there was "not Blood enough" in my editorials "to stain a pocket handkerchief." The crudity of his thought of "literal blood" as a remedy need not surprise anyone, for it was quite in keeping with the prevailing literalism of the time. None of these critics had apparently any comprehension of what it had cost in blood and suffering for the Friends in the seventeenth century—four of them going to death on Boston Common—to make their brave stand against these very theories of Calvin's mind and to "blaze" in the world a new spiritual path.

I was perfectly familiar with the slow development of these atonement ideas in the history of religious thought. I knew what Tertullian, Augustine, Anselm, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and the long line of others, had contributed to the formulation of the Plan of Salvation. I knew how deep-seated it was in the heart of the race. I knew how sacred it had become, in fact, how essential for what these persons meant by "salvation." I also knew, though not clearly or fully enough, that there was eternal significance both to the Heart of God and for

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the life of man in that voluntary suffering of Christ on the cross.

But I knew with an unescapable conviction that these crude literal views, and these mechanical conceptions of a transaction must be sublimated and transcended if Christianity in its fullness of life and power was ever to emerge. I knew that somebody must stand his ground and be true. What was needed most of all was a fresh and deeper interpretation of *salvation* itself as "a process of life" rather than as a "transaction," or as a legal, "forensic" affair. Even more essential was it to bring into this "fresh and deeper interpretation" of salvation a gripping power, a *dynamic*, comparable to that which had given such a marching power and converting power to the revivals of evangelical thought. "Rationalized" interpretations take on "a pale cast of thought." They tend to lose the emotional tone of real events. They eliminate, or at least weaken, the fear-aspect of religion, the peril in which the soul stands, and are likely to gravitate toward "a center of indifference" instead of proclaiming "the everlasting yea." The new dynamic and the new interpretation must somehow go together.

There is a remarkable passage in David Livingstone's later Journal, written after he had suffered incredible hardships and after his faith had been severely tested by tragic disappointments. "What is the atone-



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ment of Christ?" this noble soul asks. "It is *Himself*. It is the inherent and everlasting mercy of God made apparent to human eyes and ears. The Everlasting Love was disclosed in Our Lord's life and death. He showed that God forgives because He loves to forgive."

It was clearly settled in my mind when I began my work that affirmations were far more important for the business of spiritual construction than were negations. I interpreted this point in one of my early articles, and I made it as plain as I could do in words that my method was not to be one of attack and denial, but one of slow and patient reconstruction, through positive interpretations. I learned an important lesson by watching what the coming of the vernal equinox did to the old dry beech and oak leaves on the Haverford campus. They withstood the pounding of the winter storms. The rain, the snow, the sleet, the wind, could not dislodge them; but as soon as the germ of life began to quicken in the bud at the end of their stock they dropped off without the application of any outside force. The flow of sap, the pushing of soft rootlets, "the capillary oozing of water," the thrust of life, are, after all, the forces that rebuild the world after the wreckage of the winter.

To attack, head on, age-old views that have had generations of life behind them, not only does not dislodge them, but it engenders a greater intensity of belief

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in them and a new vigor, fanned by the opposition, to defend them with all the virility aroused by the smell of battle. It is, of course, an interesting question whether any real victories of the Spirit may actually be won by the method of affirmation. In any case, if the method of affirmation will *not* work, then nothing will, for it is hard to believe that any signal victories of the spirit are won by attack and counter-attack, by assault and counter-assault, by violence of spirit and counter-violence.

Well, whether naïvely or wisely, I resolved to put all my hopes on this affirmation and gentle method of approach. That meant that I must be careful not to affirm anything that was dubious or founded on guesswork and conjecture. That severe situation drove me back all the time to a basis of *experience*. I had discovered, and the years have tested the discovery, that there is a religion of experience which goes down under all the controversial issues, a religion which springs out of the constitutional nature of the human soul itself, and its relation to a spiritual environment, that is deeper and more real than the visible one in which we move and breathe. I expressed this view in an early editorial. As it stands it undobutedly needs to be clarified by criticism but it will reveal the line of affirmation which I took. "The Spirit of God enfolds every soul as

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the light and air envelop every body. Only the man with healthy lungs gets the full benefit of the air, only the person with the open eye knows and appreciates the light. The light presses upon the blind eye as closely as upon the perfect one, but it is unperceived and ineffective in one case, it performs its perfect work in the other, opening the marvelous realm of the visible creation to the enjoyment of the beholder.

"Is it not somewhat so with the soul? If a person is not conscious of a Divine Presence (Environment), if he feels no influence upon his inner man, if he has no spiritual light and is not moved or stirred by celestial currents, it is not because God has failed to come, but because the spiritual eye has not yet opened, it is because that particular person has not responded to the transforming Presence. There are all degrees of clearness, of distinctness, of definiteness with which the enviroing Presence is revealed. The Bible was not dropped ready-made from the gateway of Heaven. The messages, the prophecies, the wisdom it contains were given through men, but they were men whose hearts were open in no ordinary way to the Divine Life."

"God has not left us alone to our fate," the article continues, "not alone even to the truth He has spoken in past ages, not alone with men who serve as His vicars. When a speaker urges a prodigal to come home

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to the Father's house the word does not go forth alone. There is a still small voice which speaks louder in the prodigal's soul than the minister's voice does. This faith in a living Presence (the invisible Christ, the Holy Spirit, God with us) is not limited to any space, or to any persons. It breaks down all walls of division and makes men brothers in a real sense. It breaks down all class distinctions, such as formerly existed between clergy and laity, for he who has received the most divine power into his life, he who knows God most intimately, and he only, is a weightier man than any other. Men are to be estimated not by their wealth, nor by their social standing nor by their fluency of speech, but by the transformation of their nature and the reception of power.

"No philosophy can remake men and fill them with power. Theology which deals with dead systems is not creative or re-creative. It is the direct contact of a living Christ with the soul of man that effects the change."

That passage written nearly forty years ago is perhaps somewhat too long for "a quote," but it expresses the very center of my faith, then and now. I used the words "living Christ" in those days to express the fact that God is actually here operating in us as a dynamic Presence, and that it is the same God in character and purpose that the Christ of Galilee and Judea revealed in

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the days of the Incarnation. I was eager to bring my readers away from the abstract phrases and notions, which forever remained "mere words," to a direct experience of God as a present fact, and to an inward event which could be tested in the laboratory of a personal life.

"I knew God experimentally," is, as we have seen, the way George Fox announced the creative event which inaugurated his mission. That is vastly different from repeating some words which somebody else coined in an earlier day. I was, no doubt, too optimistic then, as I have always been, in my faith and expectation that the rank and file of busy men and women are going to take these spiritual birth processes seriously and be ready and eager to *find God* for themselves. It is, I know, an ominous fact that throughout the history of religion, it looks as though only a few persons had risen to the radiant vision of the living Presence, had known God experimentally, and had had the first-hand discovery of an environment which surrounds the soul as the air enwraps the body. The rest seem to ignore all this as unimportant for the issues of their life, *or* peradventure, they are satisfied to accept it all at second hand on the testimony of those who have been there, and so they quietly "believe in others' belief." It must be admitted that very much which passes in the world for *religion*



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is formal, static, repeatable and accepted at "second hand"—what Bergson calls "closed religion."

This condition is, however, no more true in religion than it is in any other form of human culture. One would like to know how many of the visitors who crowd the art galleries of Florence, Rome, Dresden, Paris and London, feel in any adequate way the full æsthetic significance of the creations they gaze upon for a moment as they hurry past them.

Not long ago two American travelers were in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. One of them, in tourist fashion, hurried about from room to room, estimating the value of a picture largely by its size. After half an hour he came back to find his friend standing entranced before a tiny canvas, where he had been the whole time. His companion said to him: "Why are you wasting all your time on that little picture? I don't see anything in it." "No, perhaps you don't," replied the other man, "but don't you wish you could!"

The same situation obtains, we all know, in the field of music. There can be no census which enumerates those at a symphony concert who *feel* that impalpable something in music which takes the hearer of it out of time into eternity. There are the few musicians, as Browning says, "whom God whispers in the ear," but there must be many listeners who miss the rapture and

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the glory of the performance. They wish for the most part that they *could* feel it, but it is not for them, at least not without a great deal more effort!

It is so, perhaps even more so, in the realm of mathematics. Nobody doubts now that there is an objective mathematical order in the universe. Our minds do not spin out of themselves, as spiders spin webs, our mathematics capriciously as we happen to feel inclined. We are, on the contrary, bound to conform in our mathematical thinking to an unalterable order, whether we like it or not. It is *so*. But only a few range freely in that realm. Most of us add, subtract, multiply and divide, but we are at home only in the sub-basement of this realm, and we watch with wonder the Einsteins of the race as they move freely in the realms which lie beyond us.

I believe that *religion* is the most universal of all our higher forms of culture. Auguste Sabatier was exaggerating somewhat as a romanticist when he said a generation ago that "man is incurably religious," for we all know individual men who have been quite decidedly "cured" of it, but he was essentially right in his fundamental contention that man cannot *live* in the strait and narrow limits of a space-time world and be content with finite and temporal realities. George Bernard Shaw would hardly be selected as a religious champion or as

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a prophet of the soul, but he was speaking sober truth when he said: "In my consciousness I have a market, a garden, a dwelling, a workshop, a lover's walk and above all a cathedral." There is certainly in most normal persons a cathedral, a shrine, a shekinah where they have some sort of dealings or relationship with a Beyond. It is possible, no doubt, to reduce this converse and correspondence to a minimum, to conventionalize it, or even to mechanize it, but the moment one rises to the full significance of personality he finds that the cathedral, the shrine, is an essential part of his furnishings for the voyage of life. I thoroughly believed in those editorial days that the best way to cure those persons who had dropped to the level of static, arrested, conventionalized and second-hand types of religion was to present with vigor and enthusiasm the thrill and power which attach to the first-hand type.

"There is," I wrote then, "no mistaking the power which goes out from the person who is *alive*. It is not simply goodness, or piety, or enthusiasm in the gushing sense, or magnetism of which I am speaking, for a person may have all these without having that indescribable power which appears only when there is close contact between the human soul and the Divine Life. That of which I am speaking is never an imitation, or a sham, or something to be put on and off like a gar-

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ment. It becomes as much a part of the person as his own blood is, and without it he would be dead and not *alive*."

"A person does not become a *live* Christian," I continued to say in the same article, "by his own unaided efforts, by diagnosing his inner condition, or by taking thought as though there were in our nature some seed that by a process of its own buds and sprouts and grows into the man of perfect spiritual stature. The individual must open himself to the Divine environment. That is what the reception of *grace* means. The soul must draw upon the Divine provision which is there within our reach. Activity is not the cause of life, but life is the cause of activity."

I felt convinced that there was no legitimate way to shake off the dry, dead leaves of these old theological opinions until the deeper life of the soul itself was awakened, which would in time produce its own fresh and vital truth of experience and quietly push off the desiccated variety. I further believed, perhaps too simply and implicitly, that this first-hand religious life, this religion of experience, would come to birth in many of my readers if I could make them *see* its reality and could stimulate in them confidence and expectation.

One of the main reasons why so many persons settle down to the conventionalized forms of religion is that

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they have not discovered the inner shrine, have not had their attention called to its existence within them and, above all, have had no expectation created in their souls that they are some day to discover it. I cannot prove overwhelmingly that my theory has worked, that I have done much to create expectation, that I have helped to carry large numbers of persons from the second-hand stage to the first, but I still am as sure as ever that *expectation* is a mighty factor in all these matters of the soul. I am, too, as sure as ever that one has no right to go about knocking the props, even of a secondary faith, out from under persons' lives without first helping them to find a much more adequate substitute for what they are losing.

I want to come back now to interpret a little more in detail what I meant by *a religion of life* as distinguished from a doctrinal religion. I meant, first of all by it, a type of religion that has its birth in the direct and immediate discovery of God as the deeper invisible environment of the soul. In short, religion is, as I thought of it then, a way of living as much as breathing is, or as the circulation of the blood is. There is an inflow of vital forces from beyond us, a vernal equinox of the soul, when the sun rises upon it with new creative power and a new stage of life is reached. Living becomes buoyant and joyous. One *grows* inwardly as



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normally as the maple grows in sap time. God comes to have the same assured *reality* that the ocean has for the swimmer, or that atmosphere has for the breather of its air. It is not a certainty you can prove to anyone else by logic or by figures. The only effective demonstration is that of life-processes and life-results, and these must be inward before they can be outwardly appreciated.

There comes to the soul a calm and serenity that are unusual to restless beings like us. There is a peace which passes comprehension, not merely on easy, happy occasions, but in the midst of storms, earthquakes and waterspouts. But if that were all, it might be easily assumed that the "vision of relief" was a subjective projection, an escape-mechanism, an anodyne by which the individual adjusts himself to his hard circumstance and drugs his nerves into a lethargy, which he *calls* "serenity."

The real test is not that one can "*stand* anything that can happen in the universe," though that is a near-miracle, but that the person discovers from somewhere a source of fortification which makes it possible to build, or at least to start to build, a "new sky-line" in his contracted city, a new cathedral on the stern and rockbound coasts of his finite domain, and which sets him at the still wider task of building "Jerusalem"—the Kingdom of God—in his "green and pleasant land."

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A real religion of life does not stop with the thrill or the spell of inner calm; it culminates, as we shall see, in a task, but "the everlasting sign" as I pointed out in my early stage is this, that in our stubborn nature the fir tree comes up instead of the thorn, and the balsam tree of healing appears where the briar used to flourish.

"This transforming and renewing power," I said in one of my editorials, "is the everlasting sign that Christianity is not a thing of the past. It is a present force and it is bringing more lives under the divine influence, I believe, than in any former age. It may not build such visible cathedrals as in the great Gothic period, it may not inspire painters as in the fifteenth century; the great religious composers of music may have passed away and no supremely great religious poet may be left on the earth, but still, as of old, wherever a life opens to the divine forces it is transformed by a renewing of the mind; it is raised out of its old form into a new type."

Phillips Brooks used to say: "Give me five hundred men, nay one hundred men, of that spirit which I know in three men and I will answer for it that this city shall be saved."

This return to experience, to a religion of life which I was emphasizing was neither a revival of rationalism nor of romanticism, nor was it merely a "new humanism." I was endeavoring to preserve the whole of life.

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I knew that there could be only sterility of action and purpose in a being reduced to intellect alone, as there can be only a wash of sentimentalism in a being who lives mainly in his emotions divorced from the guidance of reason. But this "whole of life" that I was seeking involves something more than "mere man," that is, than man reduced to a naturalistic being who does nothing but occupy space and consume food and produce offspring. If *that* is "humanism," to be a greater simian, only with larger brain and more skillful hands, then I never was a "humanist." From the first, I always thought of man as finite-infinite, a time and space transcending being. He was, I held, himself plus more. He could not be a person in any true sense without his essential environment, and that complete environment includes the infinite and eternal Spirit in Whom we live and move and are. The *whole life* is the life that corresponds with the whole of its environment. It partakes of eternity in the midst of time and includes it. I discovered that the word "finally" in the great prayer of the *Prayer Book*: "Grant, O God, that we may so pass through things temporal that we may *finally* not lose things eternal," was not originally in the prayer. It was added later by some feebler soul than the author, someone who had lost his expectation of anything eternal until after death. "Finally" means "after life's fitful

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fever is over," after we have left "this vale of mutability," and have entered God's other world far off in other climes, then may we not miss "eternal things." But the original prayer, before it was altered by the feebler soul, and reduced to stern time limits, thought of eternity as here and now, and aspired to a life which did not lose eternal realities here in the midst of temporal affairs.

I was endeavoring to come back to this richer whole of life which included both time and eternity, a life that no longer postponed heaven for a *post mortem* state of existence. I felt assured that this richer inclusive life was in itself essentially *dynamic*. Sterility and loss of enthusiasm are due to the division of life into a fractional part of the whole. Excessive rationalization usually leads to disillusion and sterility and the loss of vision of any adequate goal of life goes in the same direction. But the moment life is *whole* and is lived in its full, true environment, it has the normal dynamic common to all living things.

## CHAPTER VII

### A DYNAMIC FAITH

WHAT one is bound to miss in the simple scenes and events of this chapter are the living human faces which peered out once so full of intense interest in all these doings and happenings. We talk here of "movements" and "issues" and "ideas" and "projects." But once it was a *drama* that was in process with live persons as the actors of it, and every shift of scene involved the beating of human hearts and the stirring of the blood in real persons, who felt that eternal issues were being settled by what they were doing there. It is easy, too, to assume that these events were petty and insular, since they primarily concerned only a very small religious denomination in what seems now like remote "dark ages," and that they can have little significance for the great and enlightened world of to-day. But in fact, every honest human struggle for light or truth in this world is worth consideration. The battle for genuine spiritual progress in any period of human history in any religious body, however small numerically, has its contribution to make to the growing life of the world. It



can hardly be quite negligible to anybody who cares for what is truly human and vital. Perhaps under these humble events there may be revealed glimpses of principles of life which are operative in all religious bodies and for all times.

We are apt to forget, particularly if we ourselves have had the advantages of early intellectual training, how slow and painful are the fundamental changes in the thought of the race. When once certain ideas have become deep-seated in the minds of men, have taken on strong emotional color, and have come to form the precious inheritance for each new generation, they acquire an indisputable sanctity and authority. Minds become adjusted to them, feel at home with them, are as comfortable in them as the grandson is in grandfather's old chair. They form the mental stock of the family and get built into the subsoil of each new-born child, who quite naturally carries this "psychological climate" with him for the whole voyage of his life.

We often wonder how seemingly intelligent persons whom we know can have such child-minded ideas on certain topics as they often reveal. They appear to us to have water-tight compartments in their mental insides. The reason is that they have a "psychological climate" which has been unconsciously formed, a deep, subsoil life, which is so much a part of their natural, normal

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being that they never stand outside and analyze it, or view it critically. It is taken for granted as sunrise is, or the law of gravitation is. To reconstruct that subsoil and remake the "psychological climate" is like trying to reshape your voice in mature life, or like rebuilding your fundamental habits after sixty.

It is rather common to suppose that states of mind can be easily changed, while the world of nature outside is extremely stubborn and unyielding. Crowbars remain rigid no matter how much you may happen to want one to bend and take on the quality of a rubber tire. Bend it will not. It remains forever stiff and as set as flint. But did the "gentle reader" ever come up against "a closed mind"? If so, he knows how much easier it is to change the crow-bar than it is to change the mind! Attitudes of like and dislike, inability to love some one who feels that we *ought* to love him when we cannot, adjustment to new ideas when old ones hold like adamant, what can be more stubborn than these situations! It ought not to be wholly uninteresting to see an enthusiastic man, not yet disillusioned, attacking situations like that—trying to cultivate subsoils and to change "psychological climates."

There are some persons left, no doubt, who have read Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*. It remains one of the most vivid presentations of the era I am

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reviewing. In *Robert Elsmere* you see the tragedy of the clash of the old and new in action. The characters in it are there grappling with the problems which an altered world has thrust upon them. The book came as a tremendous shock to the faithful, undisturbed souls who were resolved to hold to the old and to defy the new. Many persons read it in concealment and were embarrassed to be seen with it, so "dangerous" was the book supposed to be. It has now for the most part "gone dead" because the issues have been fought out in the intervening years and the battle for the truth has been won so completely that this generation can hardly realize that one of the major battles for freedom was being fought a little over a generation ago.

If one does expect to change states of mind, habits of thought and attitudes of will, he will hardly begin by announcing that that is what he is doing! He will set about attaining some goal which will arouse group loyalty and create teamwork for the common end in view and in the process new mental states get formed. I will give two illustrations. At a conference in Indianapolis in the autumn of 1897, ten years after the famous Richmond Conference which drafted the "Declaration of Faith," I read a paper proposing the organic union of all the Yearly Meetings in America (which could unite in the plan), thus forming, if pos-

sible, a single body for the constructive work of Friends in America, instead of having the large number of independent Yearly Meetings which existed with uncoördinated action and scattering efforts. This was not the actual birth of the *idea*. Dr. William Nicholson of Kansas had suggested it as a remote possibility five years earlier. It was often spoken of in an indefinite way as an ideal for the future. It was my contribution to bring the vague suggestion to a concrete formulation and to vivify it with one man's faith that it could be put straightway into effect.

A careful historical retrospect, after a whole generation of experience with the complicated problems that have emerged, leaves some doubt in one's mind whether the Yearly Meetings scattered over the country from Maine to California, from Canada to North Carolina, widely separated in space and in different stages of intellectual and spiritual development, were yet ready for such a union or could harmoniously coöperate in teamwork. But in any case, it seemed the only alternative to the disintegration of the Quaker groups. It was known from the first that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) was not ready for such a step. The "Hick-site" Yearly Meetings could hardly be expected at the time to merge with the other groups, and it was suspected that the Friends in Ohio were too fixed in

their own peculiar position to join with the others. That left, however, over seventy thousand Friends who might be brought into something a little closer than a federated union that would tend to draw the divergent parts into closer fellowship, and gradually into oneness of spirit. It was felt that this step would coördinate the forces in the mission work at home and abroad, and would enable this large number of Quakers to put themselves as a body behind the moral and spiritual causes which they all at heart supported. The only staggering difficulty in the foreground was the theological one, though there were, too, varying ideas of polity in the type and direction of local meetings. But could all these Friends in their different stages of development agree in their theological opinions!

My paper aroused general enthusiasm and brought the Conference to the decision to undertake the experiment toward union. James Wood and I were asked to prepare the specific draft of the Plan of union, together with the draft of a Uniform Discipline for all matters of legislation, procedure and polity, care and oversight of membership, the function and management of each type of meeting from the local one to the supreme national one. Most difficult of all, we had the task of proposing what should be the theological basis for the united effort. Fortunately there was an excellent com-



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mittee appointed for counsel and criticism, but as they were scattered over the entire country they could help us only with suggestions by correspondence. For many weeks James Wood and I labored together, usually in his home at Mount Kisco, New York, and all the time with united minds, we produced "the new creation."

We gave under the heading of "Belief" a brief historical interpretation of the faith and ideals of the Society of Friends, so expressed in simple literary language that it could not be turned into a creed and yet inclusive enough to cover the various Quaker types of life and thought that had developed through the years. We knew, however, that no document could be adopted in the West which wholly ignored the "Richmond Declaration of Faith" and we consequently referred to it in a footnote, together with George Fox's "Letter to the Governor of Barbadoes," as historical documents which had received the approval of large numbers of Friends. I personally disliked both documents. They represented only one single aspect of the Quaker movement. The deeper *fundamental* roots of Quaker faith were hardly in evidence in either document. I studied them with the utmost care and became thoroughly convinced that they were thin and inadequate expressions of the Quaker movement, which has always seemed to me to be one of the major attempts to restore *the abun-*

*dant life* of the original gospel message. There was so much omitted which seemed to me to be essential, and so much put in which seemed to me to be temporary and one-sided, that I could not have adopted them as the embodiment of my faith, even if I had believed, as I did not, that any man-made statement in a given period of religious history *could* express the essential faith of a growing human soul. All creeds and declarations of faith are born in the heat of great religious controversies. They express the position of the winning or dominant party in the controversy, and they omit the truths which the defeated party championed. They are bound to be partial and limited, for they gather only what the triumphing group wishes to transmit.

I decided that I could not go on with the work of drafting if it involved the incorporation of those two statements as an expression of the essential Quaker faith. "The Letter to the Governor of Barbadoes" strikes any historical student as being inconsistent with the other writings of Fox, and it remains a mystery how the Letter could have been either written or signed by the same hand that wrote the *Journal*, the *Epistles* and the other books which interpreted Fox's mind. I have already spoken of the fact that the "Richmond Declaration" marked a profoundly transformed and Calvinized Quakerism. The two documents, however, did undoubt-

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edly express at the time the strongly evangelical outlook and state of mind of a large number of the Friends who were to form the union, and there was no way to avoid reference to them as historical documents.

I printed the first draft of the proposed "Constitution and Discipline" as a supplement to *The American Friend* for May 24, 1900. This enabled Friends everywhere—the people themselves—to read it, study it and criticize it, which they emphatically did do, especially criticize it. But the criticisms were in the main constructive and valuable. We revised and materially rewrote many sections of it in the light of the criticisms received, and we then submitted it to the individual Yearly Meetings for action, as they were the legislative bodies to which final action belonged.

The first legislative body to which it came in course was New England Yearly Meeting in June, 1900. This Yearly Meeting dated its birth from the year 1661. It had been visited in 1672 by George Fox himself. It was a body with a notable history of service behind it. It had been held continuously at Newport, Rhode Island, until 1880, after which date for many years it met alternately in Maine and Rhode Island, changing from Newport to Providence after 1902. In that fine old meeting-house at Newport, hallowed with memories and in the small wing of which Fox had probably preached, the

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memorable debate over the new Constitution took place. It was a discussion in every way worthy of the occasion. New England Friends represented almost all points of view and the good aspects and all the dangers in the new Plan were searched out and canvassed. I was often called out to interpret or to defend certain parts of it which were thought to be not clear enough or which raised doubt, and I felt the gravity of that day's action. Late in the evening, after a full day of strain, the Constitution was approved and gradually, one after another, all the Yearly Meetings which were invited to join, except the one in Ohio, approved the Plan.

The first assembly of the Central Meeting, which was provided for under the Plan and which was named "The Five Years Meeting," with delegates from twelve Yearly Meetings, met in Indianapolis, October 22, 1902, "to consummate the union" and to organize the executive committees for specific action. It was a happy moment for those of us who had struggled in faith and labored through five years of stress and strain to make the idea march, to see the corporate union actually realized and to feel the large degree of unity which prevailed. The struggles over theology and over the status of the doctrinal statements in the footnote were not all settled in one Assembly. They returned, like Banquo's ghost, to disturb our peace, but there can be little question,

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historically, I think, that the formation of The Five Years Meeting in 1902 marked both a step toward Quaker unity and a real forward step toward greater spiritual efficiency. The successive meetings at five-year periods have been attended by influential delegations from London and Dublin Yearly Meetings from abroad, and from Philadelphia in the home country, with an occasional group from Ohio, so that these gatherings have brought together a large amount of the concentrated wisdom of the entire Quaker membership in the world.

Another method of influencing the psychological climate was found in the formation of Summer Schools. Some of us began to wonder as the turn of the century came, why Summer Schools which had worked so well in English circles, might not be used to advance the truth in America as well. Dr. George A. Barton and I took the brunt of the work of making the first experiment at Haverford College. Dr. Barton was an Oriental and Biblical scholar of renown, he was a brave path-breaker in many lines of thought, and he was a profound interpreter of a vital Christianity. He was at the time professor of Biblical Literature at Bryn Mawr College, and he and I had many things, especially of the mind and heart, in common. Isaac Sharpless, president of Haverford College, was as keen for the experiment



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as were Dr. Barton and I. He secured permission from the Managers of the college for us to have the use of the buildings and grounds for the early period of the summer of 1900 for our experiment.

We secured the attendance of John Wilhelm Rowntree and of J. Rendel Harris from England, which formed a solid nucleus for a great team of leaders. We had such American scholars as George Foote Moore and Dr. Lyon from Harvard, such saints as William Newton Clarke of Colgate, such young Quaker leaders as Elbert Russell, then in the beginning of his career, such exponents of the "social gospel" as Washington Gladden. Many of the religious issues which the scholarship of the time had brought to the front for thinking Christians were fearlessly dealt with and clarified. The attendance was very large, especially for the evening addresses, when many persons from the city came out. First and last the leaders of thought in Philadelphia Yearly Meetings, both the one held at Arch Street and the "liberal" one at Race Street, were influenced by it and prepared for forward steps in life and thought. These occasions for the fearless assimilation of the creative discoveries of that time mark without much doubt an epoch in the life of Philadelphia Quakerism. For many persons who attended these meetings it was a time of *awakening*, a renaissance of spir-

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itual life and power, the beginning of a new stage. There was marked spiritual depth manifested, especially in the meetings for worship held each morning, and it soon became evident that widening knowledge did not check the warmth and fervor of the life of the Spirit.

I gave, as my special contribution, five lectures entitled *A Dynamic Faith*, in which I interpreted, more systematically and extensively than was possible in editorials, the type of religion which I have called "Religion of life" in the previous chapter. I printed these lectures shortly afterwards in a little book with the same title, *A Dynamic Faith*, published both in London and in New York. The little book, with its fitting title, had a good reception, and a gratifying sale. It brought together in compact form my budding ideas and it expressed them with considerable brevity and simplicity, for it was written first of all to hold and convince a visible audience. The warm reception it received in England came as a surprise and naturally gave me much joy. It was an even greater surprise to have Dr. Francis Peabody refer to it, as he did, in a sermon in Appleton Chapel at Harvard, soon after it appeared. I took my idea of *dynamic faith* from Clement of Alexandria, one of my most loved religious guides. He called faith "the assent of the soul" to a truth which seems to be essential for life and thought. It is a preperception, or as

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Santayana calls it, "an invincible surmise" of a truth which ought to be, and must be, and is profoundly felt to be true, and yet not *demonstrated* as truth. But genuine *faith* is more than insight. It is always the "beginning of action." It is propulsive. It fortifies the will. It begins as an experiment and ends as an experience. I carried this idea through a number of aspects of life, and endeavored to show that "faith" instead of being a weak basis of religion is one of the strongest of all the pillars on which life rests, and that even knowledge itself is possible only on the ground of assent to truths not yet demonstrated.

Each alternate year—the even ones being chosen for the purpose—we had a similar Summer School, usually at Haverford, though the third one was at Bryn Mawr College, and a later one was held in New England. They grew steadily in the range of their influence. They dealt with the most fundamental issues and they drew into the circle some of the foremost scholars in the country and some of the best lecturers. At first the primary problems had to do with the effect of evolution on religious thought, with the significance of the newer historical and critical study of the Old and New Testament, with the fresh light which had been thrown upon the history and development of Christian thought, and with the bearing of psychology on the inner nature of

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religious experience, but gradually the scope widened out and came to include the fundamental problems of the social and economic order, and the duties and obligations of a Christian who meant seriously to follow Christ in the complicated world of to-day. One of the most memorable of our experiences in this line of thought came from the lectures of that impassioned leader, Walter Rauschenbusch, who like John the Baptist, was a burning and a shining light.

Soon after the first Haverford Summer School was over in 1900, I attended the Lake Mohonk Peace and Arbitration Conference, of which I was a foundation member, and then went out to Richmond, Indiana, to give a course of lectures in a Summer Institute, held at Earlham College for religious leaders in Indiana. Its clientele was more conservative than our Summer School group had been. It was necessary to be wise and cautious and not to go faster than the spiritual traffic law of the time allowed, but forward steps were taken and frontier ground was cleared for many minds. I used the same lectures I had given at Haverford, and found a ready response from most of those who were present.

While I was in the course of giving these lectures word came of the sudden death at Copenhagen of Ellen Wood, the elder daughter of James Wood, who was

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abroad on a tour with her father and her sister, Carolina. I hurried back to Mount Kisco to be with this dear family in their great sorrow. Ellen Wood was a highly qualified nurse, trained at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and with a beautiful career of service opening before her. She had been keenly interested in every stage of the progress of the new Constitution as it developed from day to day in her father's home, and she was entering profoundly into the dawning movements which prophesied a new day. She was a rare and wonderful person, sensitive in her spirit, broad in her sympathies, extremely tender of heart, a dedicated soul, with a rich life before her. Surely "transplanted human worth" must "bloom to profit elsewhere."

Here we find ourselves brought up suddenly against a problem before which all the other problems of life fall back to a secondary place. Has this universe a single storey to it, or is it a world of two levels? Is it a world strictly confined to time and space and matter, or is it a world which includes, as well, a realm of spiritual realities of a higher order, where what begins on the first level is carried on, completed and fulfilled? If the one-level, the single storey, is all there is to it, then all those other problems over which the amateur theologians were contending so bitterly, seemed to me to be futile questions. It comes back after all to a single



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vital issue. Is the God whom we invoke in actual fact, GOD, or only an imagined reality that we have "fulminated" out of our agitated minds to dispel our fears and to argue about? If God is GOD, which means in other words, Spirit, Life of our lives, Love at the heart of things, the over-arching, under-girding Source of all that is eternally Real and True and Beautiful and Good, then we already have a two-storeyed universe with a Home in it for all we love and a Garden in it greater than Eden, where transplanted human worth *will* bloom to profit elsewhere.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE HARVEST OF THE SPIRIT IS . . . GENTLENESS

SUMMER Schools and Institutes and Five Years Meetings are threshing floors where the grains of truth get pounded out with the flail of lectures, debate and controversy. There are, however, silent processes, when as in the building of Solomon's Temple, all pounding ceases and the truth moves on "without observation." The greatest influence, even in the times of threshing, is probably the quiet intercourse where two or three sitting apart are feeling the subtle power of some kindled personality whose words come out of the deeps of a great spiritual life. Garfield was pointing in the line of truth when he preferred to have President Hopkins sitting with him on the other end of a log to any other college he knew. There would be occasions when he would need laboratories and test-tubes and lecture-rooms and a library, but the best moments would undoubtedly be those when he had his *rendezvous* with President Hopkins on the traditional log.

John Colet visited Florence in his youth and felt the spell of Savonarola's life and words. He returned to

England and passed the kindling torch on to Erasmus. Erasmus found Thomas Bilny in his university days and left him "another man." It was Thomas Bilny who awakened Hugh Latimer and kindled the burning passion in his soul. It was Hugh Latimer who in the street at Oxford lighted a fire in England—a martyr fire—which by the grace of God has never gone out. In such ways, from life to life, the torch passes on, though not often, as in the above chain, can the linkages be traced. It has been my lot throughout life to be the receiver and the giver of great friendships. There is nothing else in this world more rich and wonderful than such friendships and there is no other way of transmitting the spiritual fruitage of a life which is quite so effective. It, however, baffles description and defies all methods of cataloguing. One might as well try to photograph and describe the aurora borealis. Nor, again, is there any technique by which one can contrive and achieve friendships. They just *come*. They are by-products of life, not ends to be aimed at. Two men who contributed very much to my life at this time were Henry Churchill King, President of Oberlin College, and William DeWitt Hyde, President of Bowdoin College. They were among the best of the silent transmitters that I knew, who generously shared themselves as well as their stock of garnered truth.

It was from St. Francis of Assisi more than from any living person that I learned the full significance of the power of this silent transmission and the infinite importance of gentleness, humility, simplicity and tenderness. Evelyn Underhill has a beautiful poem which begins: "I come in the little things, saith the Lord." God certainly does come that way, and up to a point, I always knew that He did. But St. Francis gave me a unique sense of it. He came to me with his rich revealing power at the very time when I was losing my Lowell who had always found God in simple, lovely things. I had somehow taken Lowell's passion for beauty as a natural, instinctive trait in him, and I had failed to realize, until I discovered St. Francis, that it was through such simple contacts with flowers and birds and little children that the glory of God and His eternal love get revealed to us. We probably romanticize and sublimate the story of "God's poor little man," but there is in him a spontaneity of joy and wonder that seems like a fresh stream of life bursting forth from the immortal Fount of Life itself. Religion here in him changes from debate and argument, from doctrine and system, from calculation and utility schemes, to a sheer *élan vital*, a thrill and burst of joyous life and love. His poverty is not an ascetic cross to be carried, nor is it a costly method of purchasing salvation; it is a way of relief from compli-

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cation and competition, a leap into freedom and simple living. *His* way cannot be repeated now, nor can we find our simplicities by imitating him seven hundred years afterwards. He is not a *pattern*, he is an inspiration, a kindling life, that can awaken us and help us to find our own simplicities which fit this age, and to become in our day transmitters of a spirit like his.

About this same time I read John Woolman's *Journal*, edited by Whittier, who was, in his later life, one of Woolman's disciples. Here again was simplicity of style, of life and of thought. President Eliot of Harvard used to enjoy telling how he once had a visit in his home at Northeast Harbor, Maine, from Sir Frederick Pollock. One day he took the distinguished Englishman on a sail along the coast of Mount Desert Island and in among the glorious islands farther out. They sailed for hours, Eliot at the helm, Sir Frederick seated, wrapped in two rugs, looking meditatively at the bottom of the boat, missing all the scenery for which the sail had been taken. As President Eliot brought his boat skillfully alongside the wharf, Sir Frederick threw back his rugs, straightened up, and said—it was the first word he had spoken on the trip—"How did you come to be interested in John Woolman?"

President Eliot became interested in Woolman for the same reason I did. He loved the pure diction, the



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charm of style, the beauty of character, the noble simplicity, the calm humility and the triumphant faith which make this *Journal* worthy of any "five-foot book-shelf" of classics. Charles Lamb's delightful Essay has directed many persons to Woolman's *Journal* and I was familiar with that Essay from my youth, but it was in fact Whittier who first revealed to me the marvelous quality of this eighteenth-century saint.

Woolman was profoundly influenced by the seventeenth-century Quietists, Fénelon, Madame Guyon and Molinos. There is plainly enough in him a deep strain of Quietism. He lacked that spontaneous joy and bubbling humor which are essential traits of Francis. Quietism brought depth and it cultivated calm, but it did not produce joy and thrill. Woolman's spirit is consummately beautiful, but he would never have understood the fun and laughter of Francis and Brother Juniper. He carried on his soul "the heavy and weary weight of all this unintelligible world." He travailed in pain and agony to find "that pure spring of guidance" which would show him the strait and narrow path of duty. Having found it he tremblingly walked in it.

I missed in him that radiance and joy which ought, I think, to crown a saint, but the other saintly qualities were there in high degree. He seemed to me to be almost an incarnation of the Beatitudes of the Gospel.

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He was poor in spirit, meek, a mourner, pure in heart, a peacemaker, ready to be persecuted for righteousness' sake and he hungered and thirsted with a passion for what was eternally right and good. But what impressed me most in him was his gentleness, his tenderness, his absolute simplicity. The divided will, which is so much in evidence even in most good persons, did not appear in him. There was no duplicity, no doubleness, no utilitarian aims; self-seeking was as completely washed out of his heart as it can possibly be washed out and have any life of personality left. Perhaps the most striking passage in the *Journal* is the one in which he heard a divine voice say: "John Woolman is dead," and discovered that it meant, "I (John Woolman) am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," and in the same experience he found himself *merged* indistinguishably with the suffering, toiling laborers of the world.

The richest lesson I got from him was his absolute faith that a man could plant himself on an eternal principle of Right and Truth and then calmly stand the world. The meek man who does not bluster, or strive, or cry or lift up his voice, or get nervous, fussy or fidgety, but quietly stands on the Truth which his pure soul apprehends, he in the end inherits the land of promise, the goal of his hope. The Lamb, as of old,

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makes war with the beast and overcomes him. The armor of light is, as in the first century, the surest panoply for victory. That *principle* of warfare is the great message of Woolman's life, beautifully transmitted in his *Journal*.

Somewhat later William James in a well-known letter added his impressive testimony as follows: "As for me, my bed is made. I am done with great things and big things, great organizations and big successes. And I am for those tiny, invisible, molecular moral forces which work from individual to individual, creeping in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water, but which, if you give them time, will rend the hardest monuments of man's pride."

Under influences like these and under the stimulus of Charles Wagner's lectures and his little book, *The Simple Life*, I published a small book of my own on *The Simple Life*, made up of an expanded Summer School lecture in England. I dwelt in it upon the elemental principles of the spiritual life, personal discovery of God, inner faith and fortitude, calmness and serenity of spirit, abiding confidence in Truth and Goodness, and an assurance of trust in the deepest eternal Nature of the universe. I put my strongest emphasis on the importance of simplicity in one's religious faith. I felt

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then, as I do now, that a loud and insistent contention for complicated theological doctrines indicates fear rather than assurance. It is often a case of "protesting too much," of strong emphasis in order to fortify courage.

I held that the simple life in food and drink, in speech and clothes, in houses and lands, must in the last analysis go back to a more fundamental simplicity, that of the inner spirit. And I was convinced that this inner spirit of simplicity springs out of a unique fellowship with God, an intimate friendship of spirit with Spirit—a love that casts out fear. It is what Henry Churchill King, in a course of lectures at Haverford, called "Friendship, Human and Divine." But it is one thing to write a book on these primary principles of life—on simplicity and gentleness—and it is quite another matter to be oneself, as Woolman was, the incarnation of the principles of life to which beatitude—blessedness—inherently attaches. It is so easy to write mellifluous words about holy things and it is so hard to translate the same words about "holy things" into the doings of the daily life! Even the "*doings* of the daily life," however, are not enough to prove the case. It is, as we all know, possible to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, to understand all knowledge, to have mountain-removing faith, to give all one has to feed the poor,

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and one's very body in martyrdom—and yet to be at the same time in the cloud-lands of duplicity, and “to count for nothing” in those inherent qualities of life which possess beatitude.

No one who has actually attained to real humility would ever claim that he had *attained* in these high matters. I remember telling President Thomas Chase of Haverford that I saw a lady in Heidelberg once, who told me that she heard a famous American advocate of “perfectionism” say, in a public address, that he had not committed a single sin for fifteen years. “If I had heard him say it,” President Chase remarked, “I should have said to him, ‘but thou hast sinned now.’” That has always seemed to me a wise remark. To boast of attainment in such matters, to be conscious of a halo, to “cash in” one's achievements as a hero of humility, instantly reveals the “mock” character of the saintliness that is boasted about. St. Paul has, with fine insight, given the only sound attitude of mind in this respect: “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect, but this one thing I do, I press forward to lay hold on that which is set before me as the goal of life.” There is no terminus, no finite stopping place, where one can halt and read his pedometer, and say: “Now I have arrived.” Jesus, with infinite wisdom said: “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for goodness”



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—not blessed are they who are already good, righteous or perfect. It is the attitude of spirit, the high resolve, the passion, the insatiable hunger and thirst for it that count, not the attainment. The perfection which He calls for is nothing less than that of being "perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect."

In 1904 I wrote these words: "There are stories of painters who have mixed their own blood with their paint. They probably are fanciful tales, but the idea is worth something at any rate. Until the very *life stuff* of the man goes into his task, until he grinds *himself* into his paint, his work will be ordinary and will lack the mark of inspiration. What a splendid sight it is to see a young man, who has been drifting along with the flow of the current, and who has put no *blood* into his work, suddenly wake up and throw himself with passion into his daily task as though his life depended on doing it. Everybody discovers that something has happened. A new spirit has awakened. There is some power behind him. What is the explanation? He is in love. He has found an inspiration. He is working for the sake of somebody, and this passion of love gives him joy as he works to make a home and a livelihood. His whole self goes into his task, because his life has become consecrated by love. His face shines, his eye flashes, his step is quick. When he puts his hand to a

task it moves, for there is a power working in him. We need to get a love which will melt down our lives and send the spirit of our entire personality into our work. We shall stop playing at religion and the glow and rapture of service will make our faces shine, when once, *out of love*, we pour into the task of saving the world all we are and all we have."

A little later, I cannot now remember the date, though it ought to be an important one to me, I first discovered the significance of "going the second mile." As far as I can recover the source of the original suggestion, it was a short, anonymous article in *The* (London) *Friend*. The article in question did not quite succeed in making the idea *live and march*, but it left a haunting suggestion in my mind which kept budding and sprouting, and I came slowly to feel that this suggestion of "the second mile" brought to a focus what had dimly been the central aspect of my Christian "way of life."

The Roman soldier could always compel any man whom he met on the road to carry his military "kit" for an even mile, but for no more than that measured mile. Jesus must often have seen an event like that happen on the great Roman road that ran near Nazareth, and he may in his carpenter days have himself carried a soldier's burden to the next milestone. He

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seized upon this Roman custom as a vivid parable of a great spiritual ideal of the way of life. Everywhere he turned he saw religion and the moral life reduced to calculation and spoiled by the fact that they were thought of as compulsions laid upon men's souls as burdens which they *had* to carry. Religion was "cluttered" with commandments, with customs, with weary performances which had to be gone through whether one liked them or not, what St. Paul called a "yoke too heavy to be borne." There was a great temptation to wear the pedometer, to measure the mile of compulsion, and to stop short when the "must-limit" was reached. Jesus looking on and watching this religion of the compelled mile said once: "When you have done all these things that are required of you, count yourselves unprofitable servants"—you have hardly begun yet to find the real path of life.

Religion in its first intention as a way of life begins only when one goes out beyond that first milestone of compulsion, stops counting milestones altogether and contributes a mile and more for the sheer joy of it. If anybody—the legal system of your time, or the conventions of society or organized religion—compel you to go a mile, well, take up the load, and carry it with what grace, or grin you can show, but after that, go of your own accord the mile which is not compelled, the

one you add by the promptings of your own free spirit.

You can find these "second mile" persons beautifully portrayed in the "parable of the great surprise": "*When* was it that we saw thee hungry and thirsty and naked and sick and in prison and we ministered unto Thee?" The Good Samaritan, the woman with an alabaster box, Nicodemus who left all caution behind and came with his hundred pounds of spices for the burial of the one he loved—these are "second mile" persons who know of no outside compulsion, but who have an inward spring of life which thrusts them forth on their uncounted mile. Three men whom I greatly respect and love have given admirable interpretations of this "second mile" religion, T. R. Glover, Dean W. L. Sperry and Harry Emerson Fosdick, but I had made my interpretation of it before I saw theirs. The idea seemed to break out spontaneously in many minds.

It may, perhaps, be supposed by some who count themselves to be "red-blooded men" that such a soft and gentle type of religion will produce only milksops, spineless Uriah Heeps, apologizing for their existence and lacking all that characterizes the fibre of a real man. One cannot of course testify here in his own behalf that he is "a hundred per cent man." But there is "a great cloud of witnesses" made up of persons who

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were tender and gentle in spirit, in whom "the grace of the Lord Jesus" had come to abide, who did go the "second mile" with a love that would not let go, and who yet had the manliness and virility of the old heroes of chivalry. The reserve force and staying power of persons who have "dug" in and settled in upon the deepest resources of the spiritual life are truly remarkable phenomena in human history. There are other kinds of power besides that of fists and bluster, besides that of bombs and "big Berthas"—there is a terrible might of meekness. Whittier has a strong stanza in which he characterizes the strength of Joseph Sturge:

Tender as woman, manliness and meekness

In him were so allied

That they who judged him by his strength or weakness

Saw but a single side.

Perhaps some day we shall see it demonstrated that truth needs no panoply except its own, and that love is the strongest, as well as the greatest thing in the world.

One of the experiences of life which gave me, and still gives, the greatest satisfaction in the years that followed 1903 was the way in which children in all my journeyings began to show love and affection to me. I did nothing to bait them or to draw them to me. They spontaneously seemed to discover that there was something kindred between us. Anyhow, they came to me, and



they still come, after I have spoken, and smile kindly, hold out a hand, say a friendly word of thanks and make me feel that we belong together. It has happened in every country I have visited, so that it is not a purely American trait. In response to this spirit of kindness I wrote, in my early years, some books especially for children, *Hebrew Heroes*, *The Boy Jesus and His Companions*, *St. Paul the Hero*, and *A Boy's Religion* (later expanded into the first "Trail" book). *Hebrew Heroes* has been translated into Chinese, Dutch and German. *The Boy Jesus* is in German and Dutch, *St. Paul the Hero* is in Spanish, Dutch and Norse. I have received beautiful letters from children in these different countries, and I am very frequently told by some little person, as I go from place to place, how much they love one or another of these books. It is usually *Hebrew Heroes* that gets the most praise. In the first place it has the best literary quality of the list, and in the second place it appeals to children at the age when they are naïve and spontaneous and are not yet shy to say what they feel.

It will no doubt seem to many readers a very little thing to get this response of children and to have their affectionate regard. It does not prove that one's theology is "sound." It is no evidence that one's philosophy is true. Quite so. But it does indicate that there is

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something of the little child still unlost in the man, and that there is a quality of simplicity remaining which children recognize. I was struck when I visited Mahatma Gandhi to discover how the children of India loved and flocked around him, and that we had at least that much in common. George Macdonald, who always remained childlike in spirit, wrote this poem, which I love:

I am a little child and I  
    Am ignorant and weak.  
I gaze into the starry sky  
    And then I cannot speak,

For all behind the starry sky,  
    Behind the world so broad,  
Behind men's hearts and souls doth lie  
    The infinite of God.      <

## CHAPTER IX

### NOT IN "CUSTOM'S OILED GROOVES"

IN 1901 I added some classes in Biblical Literature to my regular courses in Philosophy and Psychology in Haverford College. I gave the first-year men (Freshmen) a course in the Old Testament, beginning with the narrative documents and law codes which have been woven together to make the books of the Pentateuch. I gave them some account of the stages of civilization and the cultural background out of which the narratives came into form. Then I briefly reviewed the historical development of the Hebrew Commonwealth, the Captivity and the attempts at Restoration, finishing the course with a careful study of the Prophets, their mission, their influence on the literature of the Old Testament, their guiding principles and ideals and their contribution to the religion of Israel.

I cannot claim that I was a proficient scholar in this field. My knowledge was got second-hand from the best books then available, which I studied with fidelity. I aimed to make my students *see* and feel the significance of this supreme literature and I can say with consider-

able emphasis that they did see it and feel it. It is often said that the usual college man is determined to leave the Bible on a forgotten loop, to shy away from it and to make life miserable for anyone who tries to hold him to the study of it. Just the opposite was the fact. These young fellows took to it with striking enthusiasm. They quickly discovered that they were coming into contact with the life, the development and the creative contribution of a great people and an extraordinary culture. They saw that I was not intending to bolster up a cause or a tradition or to defend an ancient theory of Scripture. We were getting at the heart of something and that something proved to be vital even for full-blooded youth. I have had many happy times in classrooms, but never any happier ones than those days with my Haverford Freshmen were. These men, now heads of families, still tell me what it meant to them to break their way into the unfolding spiritual life of the Hebrew people.

With my older men, in the three upper classes, who included all students in college not studying Greek, I followed a variety of lines of work from year to year. With one group I spent an entire year studying the Sermon on the Mount, a course which I repeated a number of times. I gave another course on the meaning of the Kingdom of God, reviewing as background preparation

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for it the Apocalyptic literature of the Jews, the order of the Synoptic gospels, the prevailing ideas in the Apostolic Church, and I endeavored to spell out in the mazes and complications of the problem, what Jesus meant by His Kingdom. I had a third variant course on the Ethical Ideals in the New Testament. Finally I gave a course on the Life, the Travels, the Epistles and the Religious Significance of St. Paul. I have many times repeated this study of St. Paul, not only with Haverford students, but also with adult classes in a number of other places. I gave it once to a large class of fifty or more in the Quaker Meeting house at South China, Maine. Many of the persons who composed the class until then had always studied the Bible in the old traditional manner.

I have outlined this Biblical study only to signify that the fresh and fearless approach to the Bible, with all the facts and difficulties boldly faced, and with the new light turned on every page of the Book our mothers loved, does not weaken its religious message, but, on the contrary, gives it increased reality and a new grip upon the thoughtful mind of youth.

But it was one problem to take unprejudiced youth through these new paces, to teach "modern" ideas to untheological minds, to have them present in person where they could challenge each point, thresh it out in



detail, have all the complications cleared up, and quite another problem to carry along readers in thousands of homes, scattered all over America, to convince minds solidly intrenched in a sacred theological system, brought up to believe that the Pentateuch, including the account of his own death in Deuteronomy, was written by Moses, that the Prophets had their messages dictated to them by Jehovah, and that the New Testament was an infallible record of Christ's words and deeds, written by the eye-and-ear witnesses themselves. This latter task of interpretation was all the time on my hands. I was determined to make my readers *see* what my students saw with enthusiasm and welcomed as a stage of spiritual freedom.

The reason why this task seemed to me to be so important was, first, that every other step of advance hung upon it. It was not possible to get adjusted to the facts of evolution, in reality not even to the facts of Copernican astronomy, until a sounder, truer and freer conception of Scripture was formed. In the second place, the youth growing up in these homes and held to a traditional view were always in danger of losing their religious faith altogether when they came in later life to discover how unfounded their early views had been and when disillusionment had set in, as it so often does. In the third place, Sunday School teaching on the old

basis had become dull and unreal to children's minds. It lagged far behind the day-school teaching for the same children, and growing boys and girls by the thousands were revolting from it and were forming a thorough distaste, if not disgust, for the Bible.

This situation has been, was, and unfortunately in many places is, a major spiritual tragedy. A child or a youth taught to believe that the Bible is the immutable Word of God can hardly avoid trouble and confusion when he begins to discover that the actual facts of nature do not conform to the written pattern. The Bible was plainly enough written to fit a conception of the earth, thought of as fixed in space, with a crystalline sky turning about it, and with sun, moon and stars set in it. Heaven is everywhere considered to be a place above the dome and God is thought of as dwelling beyond the sky. That imagery which runs throughout the books of Scripture was universal in every civilization and in all literature before the sixteenth century of our era. It forms the cosmic structure of the system of philosophy of both Plato and Aristotle. The Church saw at once that the theory of Copernicus and Galileo did not fit this Biblical imagery and was in many texts sharply at variance with it, and quite naturally the authorities of the Church strenuously set to work to suppress the new theories and to close the mouths of these disturbers of

its peace. Luther was as violently anti-Copernican as was the Pope.

But little by little the world got adjusted to the newly discovered facts. People went on saying "the sun rises" when they really meant the earth has turned on its axis, but in the popular mind the sky continued to be thought of as a crystal dome and heaven was still believed to be "up yonder." In fact, most persons went on using the traditional imagery and did not "think through" the revised cosmology, nor see that, if taken seriously, it involved a new conception of Scripture. If the Bible *was* the infallible and immutable Word of God, then Copernicus was undoubtedly wrong and the old astronomy was the correct one. His system was at sharp variance with the Bible strictly interpreted, and Galileo was plainly a heretic when he said that the earth moved, turned or revolved.

That crisis was in reality a harder one for the Church to meet than the evolutionary crisis of the nineteenth century was. The doctrine of evolution came into violent collision with only one passage of Scripture, the *Genesis* narrative, and at first it seemed possible to get around the difficulty by assuming that the "days" of creation were "long epochs." That explanation was gradually discovered, however, to be a *tour de force*, a makeshift. It very soon became evident that the new

conception of man's origin carried with it a far-reaching transformation of the fundamental interpretation of man and of God. A creation over and done with in six days, with "the making of man" a finished fact, plainly implied a quite different God from One who builds universes by an unfolding process of æons and who is still making man, while "the earnest expectation of creation" is waiting for him to be revealed in his godlike form. It was obvious enough that the writer of the *Genesis* passage meant *days* as we understand days, that he was using the cosmology of Babylonia, was taking a well-known creation-story that had been current for a thousand years and was adapting it to fit his more spiritual conception of God, but even so, he naïvely thought of God as a greater Man, working as a Builder does from outside, like Plato's *demiurge*. It proved impossible, too, to make the chronology of the early narratives fit the facts which slowly accumulated from the work of geologists, anthropologists and historians. These narratives could not be taken literally as the infallible Word of God.

Then followed on the merciless discoveries of the higher critics. They *demonstrated* that the early books of the Bible revealed many layers of civilization, like the strata of a buried city, and the documents or strands embedded in these books revealed strikingly different

cultural levels. The evidence was as overwhelming, and as convincing, to those who faced the facts, as was the Copernican astronomy or the record of fossils in rock strata of the earth. These cultural documents showed the human mind grappling with the fundamental problems of life and death, of creation and the birth of civilization, of sin and deliverance, problems as old as smiling and weeping. They bore the marks of great epic literature springing from profoundly religious souls, possessed of marvelous flashes of inspiration and insight and plainly enough working under the guidance of a greater Wisdom than their own, but not to be considered divinely dictated documents.

These views presented little difficulty for any persons except those who insisted that every part of the books called Holy Scripture was an infallible revelation of the Word of God for all the ages. That latter position could be held only by an absolute refusal to accept the facts which were all the time rolling in. It, therefore, became an urgent task for anyone who wished to defend the faith in a noble and adequate way to interpret the new situation clearly and bravely, without dodging the issue, though it had to be done in a gradual and patient way. My first editorial of interpretation, written in 1897, was cautious and restrained, as it had to be to meet the fixed "psychological climate" of most of the



readers of it, but it showed plainly enough that the writer of it was not afraid of new light and that he proposed to go forward wherever genuine light might lead. The article was as follows:

"Friends have always believed and taught that God is self-revealing, that His Spirit unfolds to receptive men, in measure as they are able to receive it, His truth, His will, and His purposes. We rest our whole faith on the fact that *God communicates with man*, and that He always has been doing so, and we regard the Bible as the monumental record of revelations made in one particular country, to the holy men of one particular people, preserved for us in the winnowings and siftings of the ages—a revelation which has no parallel.

"But we know that it is a revelation of God, not because tradition says so, not because the Church pronounces it such, but because of its spiritual power, because it gives us the loftiest message of God the world has ever received, because it never loses its divine freshness, because those who have the most intimate acquaintance with God find in its great utterances the never failing food for their spiritual life, and because the inspiration of the Spirit in the hearts of saints and prophets in all ages, since the canon closed, has not produced anything which goes beyond or even approaches this sublime level of revelation.

"Now until some greater revelation appears, which shall take the place of this voice of God through holy men, we may rest assured that the Bible will continue to hold its unique place, no matter what decisions are reached regarding its human authorship, or the date of its composition.

"It was once supposed that Christianity was endangered because men taught that the sun was the centre of our system instead of the earth, as had always been taught. We now see that the truth of Christianity does not rest on the acceptance or rejection of any scientific theory, for the Kingdom of God is an eternal fact, and it 'comes,' as Christ taught us to pray, whether sun or earth is centre, whether creation is by fiat or by process, whether another man's theory of the millennium or of baptism or ours is true, whether the Book which has proved itself inspired was written just as we used to think it was or not. Our main business is to show beyond all doubt that it is a 'mighty sword of the Spirit,' and to wield it as such. He who wastes his time fighting theories which he cannot from the nature of the case understand, when he ought to be using all his powers to demonstrate the magnificent truth of inspiration, and to show the real effect of the sword of the Spirit, is in danger of being condemned for

'The unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,'

and he is taking just the wrong tack to defeat the enemy. Let us prove that God was and is self-revealing, that His revelation is an irresistible force, and that, whatever is finally proved concerning authorship and date, this word of God is quick and powerful, a mighty power for pulling down strongholds. In this, as in everything else, it is the positive and not the negative position which we are to hold. This is God's revelation, and we propose to make it effective. No other course will count a straw, for mere talk stems no movement, any more than King Canute's voice stopped the incoming tide."

I was here maintaining the truth that God is in all ages a *self-revealing* Being as certainly as a luminous body must emit light, but the "revelation" will necessarily conform to the spiritual height and moral capacity of the persons through whom the revelation comes. The cultural stage of a race is bound to be a factor in the formation of the truth which breaks through that race. A people with a genius for spiritual insight will be a "chosen people" for purposes of revelation, while a race like the Philistines or the Edomites, "too blind to have desire to see," will not count much as organs of spiritual light and truth. Always and everywhere the human factor will be in evidence. Wherever a message comes which is of perennial value for the life

and growth of man's spiritual stature, it will bear the marks of the age, and the tinge of the civilization out of which it sprang.

That emphasis on the human factor I steadily gave. I meant, of course, that "revelations" are not fulminated from the sky. They are not transmitted through passive instruments. The "unveiling" is adapted to the mental and spiritual growth of the person who lifts the veil. Otherwise it would be purely miraculous and it would be a "mystery," incapable of assimilation by the human mind at the stage when it came.

But the price which we must pay for a vital and spiritual conception of revelation is that it will of necessity lack *infallibility*. Man is beyond question subject to inspiration. He can be raised, and often is raised, beyond himself. He can see farther and speak better than he knows. He can become an organ of a greater Wisdom than any he has learned from books. We understand in a mild degree to-day the psychology of this unique experience of inspiration. There is no reason for doubting the fact of inspiration, and there is every reason for claiming that it can reach extraordinary heights in persons who possess spiritual genius in a unique degree.

But *infallibility* is a wholly different matter. Infallible information, infallible truth, if it is to fit fully

developed minds, if it is to be true for those who are "heirs of all the ages, in the foremost files of time," would be inscrutable and devoid of meaning for the mind in the childhood of the race when it was supposed to be communicated. Infallibility and development are incompatible. Static truth and growth of mind cannot keep house together. In short, I was endeavoring in my editorial days to convince my readers that the revelation of God, like life, like history, is a process in which God and man coöperate and hence it must be *vital* and not *mechanical*—through an *organ*, not through an *instrument*.

I aimed also in my work to make my readers and my hearers understand that the theological systems to which they so tenaciously clung had not dropped ready-made from a divine Hand, but were the work of many generations and the outcome of many controversies. The Apostles' Creed is scarred in almost every sentence of it with the marks of the battle with Gnosticism in the first and second centuries, and with Docetism, a heresy which sprang out of Gnosticism. It reveals without doubt the triumph of the nobler truth, but it was not a ready-made standard of eternal truth given by Christ to His apostles and by them transmitted to all posterity. It was threshed out in one of the major struggles which the Church has passed through in its eventful history. The



Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, in original germ one and the same, show the subtle quality of the Greek mind triumphant in the Church and carrying Platonism over into Christianity. Once more Athanasius had a far nobler interpretation of Christian truth than did Arius and his followers, but no one ought to mistake the fact that these creeds are deeply scarred by the stern battle, are couched in the terminology of the fourth century, and come from the Platonic stream rather than from the headwaters of the New Testament.

The same thing is true of St. Augustine's evangelical system, which has played such a mighty rôle in Christian history. It does not come pure and unsullied from the teaching of the four gospels, nor does it exist ready-formed in the Epistles of the first missionary to the Gentiles. It is a blend of many minds, of many stages of culture and of many lines of influence. It became a pattern form for after ages. It passed through the minds of Luther and Calvin, was reshaped to fit the age of the Reformation. It was molded in new form by John Wesley and in time seemed to be the essential doctrine of Christianity, as though it had been divinely communicated. Here again the human factor was unmistakably present, the historical process was as evident as was the spiritual significance of the truth embodied in it. It was not an eternal and infallible form of doctrine.

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It was the best and truest form that the foremost interpreters of Christian thought could arrive at, as they lived and labored to find, what St. Paul called "the mind of Christ" for their generation. It is, however, not truly "evangelical," it does not completely express the mind of Christ, unless it is adapted to our spiritual stature to-day, unless it corresponds with truth and life as we know them now, unless it can pass through the alembic of our noblest thought and come forth without dross.

But how firm and solid these forms seemed! What a comfort and a support they were for unadventurous souls! And what a labor it is to build up slowly and painfully the structure of one's own faith! Dean Inge has suggested a new line to a famous hymn:

*They* climbed the steep ascent of heaven  
Through peril, toil and pain;  
O God, to us may grace be given  
To follow *by the train*.

The easy way, "by the train," or on what Whittier called, "oilèd grooves," will not do for genuine souls. The truth for them must be *freshly* discovered, *personally* known, *vitally* experienced, whatever the cost, and it must be expressed in terms and in forms that fit the mind's present life.

I steadily held to that position and though I was

almost deluged under letters from worried readers who wanted to be let alone, and to be fed on what they called "the old corn," I kept sounding louder and clearer this insistent message.

## CHAPTER X

### "WHERE TRACK THERE IS NONE"

MY classes in psychology at Haverford included all the Juniors in the college, as this course was a required one. I was soon impressed with the fact that Psychology tended to shake the student awake if he had not already found himself. It opened many new approaches to life. It gave fresh insights into the significance of what was going on within the man himself. He began to see what it meant to be "captain of his own soul" and he wondered whether he might be. The formation of habits, laws of memory, importance of imagination, control of instincts, possibilities of freedom, these and hosts of kindred problems, caught him where he lived and aroused the keenest interest in him, though of course it was not universally so.

There were always some men who had been trained to deal with *observable facts* in physics, chemistry or biology, and who felt bewildered when they were asked to deal with this other type of fact, which could be found only by the inward turning of the mind and which was not *there* for eyes, or ears or finger-tips. A mental *object* is a very different reality from the con-

tents of a test-tube, or from the object on which the student works in the physical or biological laboratory. The student must be trained to handle "mental processes," "mind-states," "conscious awarenesses," "attitudes," "fringes," "concepts," "values," which cannot be seen as viewable objects, nor turned into tangible things to pass around the class, nor thrown on the screen in cinematograph fashion. In short, the student must learn to think of objects which belong in another realm than the one which senses reveal.

The easiest way out of this difficulty is to interpret all mind-facts in terms of body-processes or body-effects, which can be examined like other laboratory facts. That means the substitution of brain-states—cortex-processes and nerve-processes—for mind-states and the attempt to get back to objects which occupy space and can be dealt with by familiar quantitative and measurable methods. Psychology in America very early took this seemingly natural track. If psychology was to be made an exact science it was assumed that it must have measurable units, which could be observed and could be treated as repeatable facts, the same for everybody. That could be possible only if *body-facts* could be substituted for *mind-facts*, or processes of consciousness, so that the tendency grew rapidly in this country to turn psychology into a subtler branch of physiology, or biology, and to study



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only *behavior*, i.e., observable and measurable phenomena, which would turn it into a naturalistic science, thoroughly materialized and mechanized.

This tendency was well under way when I began my teaching of psychology at Haverford, though it had not yet reached its peak of eminence in Watson's *Behaviorism*. I met it from the first with stout resistance, though I never had any doubts that the battle was to be a long and a severe one before the basis for a genuine spiritual life could be securely established. There could of course be no question that mind and brain were intimately correlated. No one could think of studying the mind without taking the brain into account. The brain can be mapped out, its functions localized in specific areas, and when one of the specific areas in the brain suffers a lesion, or is otherwise injured, the corresponding mental functions cease to appear. It was easy and natural to jump to the conclusion that the brain "secreted" consciousness, or at least that the brain centres "produced" the mind-functions. To put it in technical terms, the *neuroses* produced the *psychoses*.

All these issues quite obviously went over into the field of ethics and profoundly affected the method of treatment in the course in ethics, which from 1901 onward I gave to the Senior class. There could be no area of moral freedom for man on the basis of naturalistic,

behavioristic psychology. Acts of the will would be as rigidly "determined" as is the reach of the tide on the sea-beach, or the swirl of the water in the eddy of a river current, or the swing of a compass needle by the impact of magnetic waves. If this psychological basis was a sound one, then Ethics would have to be reduced to an objective and realistic study of the moral habits and ethical customs of the race—it became a branch of anthropology. One could talk only of *what is*, or *what was*, never of *what ought to be*. "Ought" ceases to have any meaning in a world of pure naturalistic forces, in which every deed is settled by brain explosions, caused by incoming nerve currents and producing specific and calculable *reactions*.

There will always be persons who are not interested in the task of making trails in these jungles of the intellectual world, or of following them when they are made. They will sympathize with the little boy in the arithmetic class whose teacher said: "If I take 27 from 56, what is the difference?" "Yes," the blasé boy answered, "that's what I say. What is the difference? Who cares?" It is one thing to build highways for automobile traffic from Maine to Florida. But it is quite another matter to cut paths through forests and swamps for the mind to travel on. On these highways of the spirit one journeyeth not on foot, or with wagons, not

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with trains or motor cars. To journey here one needs only the eager desire for reality and the passionate determination to arrive.

I was confronted with this situation when in 1902 I was writing my lectures for the English Summer School of 1903—lectures which constituted my book, *Social Law in the Spiritual World* (1904). I was threshing out these issues not only for the public lectures and for the book, but as well for my college students and, put in simpler fashion, for the readers of my editorials. I said in my first lecture in England: "There is no religious view or practice so sacred that it does not sooner or later find itself summoned into the sanctum of the psychologist, where it is calmly asked by what right it continues to survive, and to hold a place in the lives of mankind." "The Christian minister," I said in the same lecture, "is keenly watching the progress of psychology. He is beginning to discover that every one of his precious articles of faith must finally submit to a psychological test. He has weathered geology and biology; can he peradventure bring his ship past this new headland? Does psychology give us any basis for right and wrong, for truth and error? Does our private consciousness spring out of a Deeper Consciousness? Is mind or soul anything more than a comforting *word* and does not the entire inner life of man

finally reduce to brain vibrations set going by "ether vibrations"?

It seemed to me absurd to be wasting good energies of life over petty theological opinions, hardly more significant than the battle of the "big-endiens" and the "little-endiens" which Gulliver's Lilliputians fought, when the very possibility of the existence of a spiritual reality of any type in this strange universe was at stake. It seemed like worrying over some tiny minor ailment when one was confronted with the possibility of having his life blood drained away through a gaping wound, or like mending the roof when the house was on fire. It was obvious enough that there could be no hope of any immortal life in a world whose ultimate reality was material stuff, nor could one go on talking of the survival of the soul after death if the soul's existence was dependent upon the functioning of the physical brain. It would be, as Socrates had long ago seen, like expecting to have music after the musical instrument had worn out, or had broken down.

These crucial battles of the spirit are so nearly won to-day that few persons can quite realize how it feels to be in the fighting line and on the perilous edge when nobody knows yet which way the battle will terminate. What always amazed me was the fact that so few persons seemed to know that the battle was on, and that

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so many, who did vaguely know that it was being fought, appeared not to care very much which way the issue turned. It is more than likely that those who did not care then, when the battle was intense, would only be bored now with an account of the details of the movements, the maneuvers and the lines of the trenches. In any case, no battles of the spirit are ever won "for good and all." New issues emerge, new discoveries are made, new sciences are born, new approaches are found to the age-old problems of the soul, and all that seemed once to be so nicely fixed and settled is flung open again, put in jeopardy once more and must be fought over with new weapons. But it is better so. I had rather be battling desperately for the truth not yet won than to be the dull and sleepy guardian of an ancestral heritage of truth, established beyond doubt long ago, and inherited from generation to generation without cost or labor or peril.

I shall not now review with any show of fullness or completeness the arguments of those old contests. Are they not written in the books on my readers' bookshelves? It may be said in passing, though almost everybody now knows it, that from the nature of the case ultimate issues of life and reality could not be settled by the psychological method. Psychology, in so far as it follows the scientific method, is limited to the sphere



of observation and description. It can report only what it observes and finds to be describable. The psychologist is bound to be an impartial "spectator" who merely notes what passes before the footlights of consciousness. He deals and can deal only with what happens, with what occurs, with what is *there* to be described. What is *ultimately real* is not his problem. No merely descriptive or observational science can launch out into the deep, let down its buckets into the wells of infinity, and make up its accounts with what essentially belongs to "the eternal nature of things." In fact, the main disturbances to faith have come from the dogmatic utterances of men in some one scientific field, who have picked up a few pebbles along the fringes of the shore where they could observe what passed before their footlights, and who forthwith claimed to have universal knowledge about the currents and the nature of the unexplored ocean at its midsea depths.

I was always convinced that the right way of approach to all these deeper problems of life was to begin by asking, humbly and modestly as Plato and Kant did, what kind of a mind is implied in a person who possesses knowledge of what may be called "truth," who loves, enjoys and appreciates the beautiful and the good for their own sake and who has inherent capacity in his being to transcend the given, to live beyond every-

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thing that is presented to the senses, and, in some measure, to help to create, that is, to make *real*, the world of these ideal visions. That was my way of approach in my college lectures, during these years, and that is the method applied in *The Social Law in the Spiritual World*.

Any mind that can claim to *know truth* has already passed beyond observed and observable facts. Truth carries an aspect of necessity. If it is true it must be so, and that "aspect" of *must* could never be "observed." It is not an "object" for a "spectator" mind. It could not pass before the "footlights" as sense impressions do. It could be born only in a mind that does something more than report what is observed. Nobody "observes" necessity. It is not "presented" to sense; it is the creative product of mind. It springs out of the deeper nature of mind itself. The universal aspect, which *truth*, once more, reveals and demands, carries us in the same direction. A "fact" is something that can be observed and reported. A "truth" is a formulation, a judgment, an interpretation of a situation, which is true not only for my mind or my neighbor's, but for all minds that operate rationally. One does not apply the great word "truth" until he has arrived at something which defies all attempts to doubt it. One sees that truth must be the way it is, and that therefore

every mind, when it is once liberated and freed from its spectacles of prejudice, must see that it is *so*. If two given things are each equal to another third thing, then the two original things must be equal to each other. That "truth" is not confined to the narrow area of a single locality. That is not the chance opinion of one man. If it proved not to be true in Orion or in Aldebaran we should know that those stars were deeply infected with insanity, in short, that only lunatic minds operated there.

What I am calling "truth" Plato called "ideas," and those ideal realities of Plato always seemed to him to belong to an eternal realm, from which in fact the mind itself had come, had emerged, into this world, "trailing clouds of glory." Kant, too, had found the ground and basis for truth in the fundamental nature of mind. There may not be many occasions when we can legitimately apply the word "truth," but when we do apply it, we mean something more than a fact, we mean that something *has to be* the way it is, and that it *is so for everybody*.

Obviously when we claim to know truth we are confronted with a type of mind which is quite different from the "spectator"-mind of the observer or the mental states observed in psychology. Something more is involved than a stream of mental states, a procession of

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actors before "the footlights of consciousness." This mind that we are talking about here is a unifying agency, which binds many observed facts or *data* into a single whole. It preserves its identity in the midst of the changing facts which take on a meaning and significance far beyond the presented situation. The mind is all the time rising from the many items before its "footlights" to a single spire-top of reality, through which it interprets for itself and for others every one of the given items. In other words, that kind of a mind reveals a quality of continuity, permanence, identity of meaning, originality, creativity and unification. We have come upon something that is very different from an "observer," and something equally different from a "reaction mechanism," or a "behavior device."

When we explore the significance of beauty for persons like ourselves or, still more, when we consider the glory of the pursuit of an ideal of life, we find ourselves still farther removed from the "spectator" type of mind or from the mere "reactor" to an external stimulus. The appreciation of beauty implies, involves, presupposes, a unique synoptic power of mind, a mind that can bind a thousand aspects of form and color or sound into a single integrated whole, held together, felt as a unity and appreciated as an organic whole of many parts or aspects. There is "an imaginative do-

minion" of mind in all such experiences. The mind itself has brought something into play. There is, too, a creative contribution without which beauty could not be. A mind that acted only as a "recipient" of details, and received only a *seriatim* row of items of sensation could have no beauty. We have all noticed that it is futile to take even the wisest pet dog or the dearest house cat out to see the sunset, or to view the treasures of art in the Metropolitan Museum. Their minds are not synoptic. The synoptic mind with its "imaginative dominion" is very different from the "spectator" mind of the psychology books. This point brings to light one of the serious troubles which I find with the type of psychology which I am here criticizing. It is that it falls into what may be called the "genetic fallacy." It starts with the animal type of mind and assumes that our kind of mind has developed biologically from it and therefore is like it, *only more complex*. My contention, then as now, was and is that the mind that knows truth and appreciates beauty is unique, and partakes in some degree of another sphere of reality than the empirical one.

Even more strikingly original and creative is the mind of the person who feels the compelling power of "ought" and who lives for an ideal of goodness, which could not be found by a "spectator" mind, since it does



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not yet exist in the world of things to be seen or heard or handled. The most characteristic and, at the same time, the most unique thing about a person is his capacity to expand life in ideal directions, to forecast what ought to be even when it is not yet, to overpass everything in his actual environment and to catch a vision of a more perfect life, a more perfect world, a better human society than now exists. It is a new form of "imaginative dominion over experience." The poet, the artist and the musician have always known how to raise a particular object up to a universal consecration, to see a beauty or a glory that never was on sea or land, but few of us realize adequately that the prophet, the creative statesman and the humble seeker for a life that can truly be called "good," is also living under an "imaginative dominion" which runs far ahead of experience and sees "what ought to be" as clearly as the mathematician can see how his tiny arc must be completed.

It goes without saying that this capacity for the ideal expansion of life is stronger in some persons than it is in others, and it is probably only in the moral and spiritual *genius* that it comes into its full glory, but there is nobody worthy to be called a person who does not live out beyond the edges of what now *is*, and who does not strive for what his soul sees *ought to be*. We have

to reckon then with a type of mind which is essentially self-transcendent and which carries within itself a native propensity to see ideal possibilities lurking within all the scenes and circumstances which the senses "present" to us.

Well, but what if we do have that kind of a mind? What does that prove? How does it get us off the desert island of our time-space world, surrounded by the sea of mystery, as we seem to be? First of all, it means, if it is true that we have such an inner self as that, that there is a spiritual basis of reality at the center of our being. We are not "pipe-dreaming" when we talk of "the spiritual life," since it is the most intimate and the most essential reality of our lives as self-conscious beings. We do not need to begin with "imagnations" when we speak of the "spiritual world," we *find ourselves in it and of it*.

In the second place, this type of inner self, supposing one has it, carries implications, far-reaching implications, as to its origin, and the deeper environment in which it lives. "We grant," Emerson said once, "that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it is mean?" We should not be so pathetically impressed by the narrowness of the finite limits in which we are set, if we were not all the time, by "intimations clear of wider scope," reaching beyond the finite, for, as Hegel

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used to say, to be conscious of a limit is a sure sign that one is already out beyond it. An awareness of the infinite, at least a dim, haunting apprehension of a more, underlies our sense of being bounded, as Hamlet would say, in the nutshell of finite limits. Our "dreams," if nothing more, as he discovered, go far beyond the nutshell range.

There is nothing in this world of time, space and matter from which, as an adequate source, a central being like that within us could come. Conjurers seem to "juggle" rabbits out of empty hats, but if they do get them out of the hats, then we feel sure that they must already have been in there. You cannot without a whooping "genetic fallacy" get our kind of inner life by increasing ever so much the complexity of a jungle simian or a flat-nosed baboon. Something unique and unpredictable has arrived, and its source must be adequate to account for its nature. Nobody ever saw more clearly than Plato did that the type of mind which can organize all the *data* of sense experience and interpret them through a permanent and universal Idea of the True, the Beautiful and the Good, cannot itself be one of the items, one of the *data*, a product of that fleeting sense world. Tennyson, too, was in the great succession when he wrote the words: "The soul that drew from out the boundless Deep."

Not only is such an *origin* implied, but just as certainly is a constant spiritual environment implied, in which the soul in its inner, deeper aspects, lives and moves. I expressed that faith this way in 1903: "The moment we come back to the adamantine fact of the unity of consciousness and realize that the reality of the world outside us and the significance of the life within us demand a deeper conscious Life in which ours is hid, our agnosticism must go. Unless we are prepared to be deniers through and through and to write 'mene' on both the outer and the inner world, we must admit the reality of a deeper Self who is the life of our lives, and that every little inlet of human consciousness opens into the total whole of spiritual Reality. . . . Our slenderest idea, our restless seeking for the infinite, our feeble pursuit after an ideal are mighty facts, for they show that the infinite is already present in the finite and that we bear the marks—however dimly—of Him in whom we live." <sup>1</sup>

This interpretation, given in my early middle years, met an immediate response from many sources. My older friends, William DeWitt Hyde and Henry Churchill King, gave me their hearty backing. Harry Emerson Fosdick, then a seminary student, has often

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, p. 224. The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia.

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told me that the *Social Law in the Spiritual World* helped him to find his trail of life. From England came a stream of kindly testimonies from persons who said that it "spoke to their condition." I was, however, primarily concerned to present to my students at Haverford a way of life that would give them a note of reality and at the same time an awakening of interest in the aim to make life a fine art and a significant thing. I talked out to them in less formal style the substance of what went into the book. My "lectures" became more and more conversational in tone, more interpretative of life, less bookish and academic, and with pauses for challenging questions, discussions and debate. I endeavored to make the lecture periods occasions for facing seriously and above everything else, honestly, the difficulties confronting the modern world and to blaze a trail which would make life rich, meaningful and thrilling. How far I succeeded in the adventure, only my old students can tell.

I can say, however, that they gave me splendid attention and a response of real affection. My main regret as I look back across the years is that I gave them so few and scattering opportunities to come into my home life, to form close and intimate relationships and to share completely in my inmost thoughts and struggles. A few did do it, and pull at my latchstring with ease



and freedom. But I was always busy with the heavy tasks of life and thought which devolved upon me, and I was "on the wing" too often to be a good friend and neighbor to those closest at home. Nothing will ever quite make up for this loss in possibilities of intimacy. And yet, wherever I go in these later years, I find old Haverford "boys" coming to greet me and to welcome me, making me feel that strong cords of love got forged in those middle years.

## CHAPTER XI

### "THE WHEEL BROKEN AT THE CISTERN"

I HAD to do my heavy work of trail-breaking in these middle years with a body that only half supported my spirit. This chapter will not be a catalogue of woes or a mournful tale of ills, but it will need to deal briefly with some of the ways in which my table was prepared in the presence of enemies and how, notwithstanding the fact that I was ringed about with difficulties and hindrances, the cup of life ran over with a supply that was more than enough for one. I had a fine fundamental fiber which the early years on a Maine farm had built. An incident of these early years will perhaps show how physically tough I was. I started off to work at lumbering in the woods one day in early winter when I was about sixteen. On my way I met a little group of boys who said that the cove at the south end of the lake had frozen over in the night and "would hold." With youthful enthusiasm I said, "Let's go and try it." When we got to the ice I "dared" any boy to go out as far as I would. I took a stone in my hand and walked out on the bending ice as far as was "prudent," put

down my stone and challenged any boy in the group to carry it farther than that. Somebody did it. Then I took it out still farther; and on and on, until finally the ice broke and I went down into the frigid water. I endeavored to climb up on the edge of the broken ice but it kept giving way under my weight and I went on "breaking ice," as we called the process, until it at length held me and I climbed out of the water and reached the shore. I took my axe and my dinner pail and went on to the woods, dripping wet with icy water and chopped away at the old forest trees until noon, when I ate my cold dinner and continued my work the rest of the day, as unconcerned as though I had been made of iron. I took no harm from the exposure and it did not occur to me then that I was taking any risk. I was strong in bone and sinew throughout my youth, but a defective digestive system, which often seemed like a ball and chain dragging at the ankle of a runner, early made itself evident.

When I was twenty a strange type of what is loosely called "hay fever" afflicted me. It had nothing to do with hay and it was just as bad in winter as it was in summer. It was all-the-year-round "hay fever." I was entirely free from it in some localities and I was turned into something "very like a wreck" in other localities. I never knew, during the period under consideration,

when I went out on a journey, whether the place of my service and entertainment would be "propitious," or "victimizing." I might rest as peacefully as the seven sleepers of Ephesus, or I might have a night "without a wink of sleep." I soon noticed that I was worse in places where I had to drive from the station with a horse, but for years that furnished no clue to the seat of the difficulty. Gradually the trouble which had been confined largely to inflamed nose and eyes became a deep-seated asthma. There were localities in which I could not sleep at all, and where it often seemed as though each breath would be the last one I could draw. Such nights could hardly be favorable preparation for the coming day which was likely to be the occasion of public addresses before large audiences. The asthma, furthermore, seriously affected my nervous system, especially my spinal cord, so that it became most exhausting for me to stand for long periods at a time.

Rheumatism was always a trait of my mother's family and it very early showed a liking for me. There are as many kinds of rheumatism as there are of golden rod, and most of the generic kinds took a turn at my physical system. I had neuralgias, neuritises, lumbago of many forms, and that unforgettable anguish known as "shingles." "Rheumatism" is probably not the right medical word to cover the whole brood of pains and

troubles, but it seems likely that all my forms of suffering came from poisons seeping into my body from sources of infection which were concealed somewhere within me. It seems probable now that my teeth were the main source of the woe. I had a dentist once who was mayor of the city where he lived and where he pulled and mended teeth. I hope he was a better mayor than he was a dentist, otherwise he must have governed the city very badly. It would be difficult to compute the "damage" he did to me. His work at filling cavities looked well in the mirror, but it usually produced pus-sacs at the root of the tooth, and they later revealed their presence at considerable distance from their abiding place. Satan has often had to bear the blame for deeply hidden pains and mysterious assaults which should have been charged up to the account of a blundering dentist.

But the most persistent of all my body troubles was that ancient foe which bears another inclusive generic name, "indigestion"—Carlyle's old misery. I suppose my case of indigestion should be blamed neither on Satan nor on a dentist, but on my own indiscretions in earlier life, though I was not conscious of being indiscreet. Somewhere along the line of years I acquired what is now called "a collapsed intestine," though when it "collapsed" or why it "collapsed" I never knew.



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I am told by my medical "comforter" that I have millions of fellow companions in this same misery.

It might just as well be called "nervous indigestion," for the "collapse" is inextricably tied up with my state of nerves. Apparently everything in this sensitive sounding-board of a body *is* tied up with nerves. Mental exhaustion immediately affects the "collapse." Vigor of mind, absence of mental strain, freedom from struggle and worry seem almost miraculously to repair the damage. All these rheumatic and neuralgic things, too, lie very close alongside the nerve tracks. And all troubles of all these types upset sleep, even if they do not "murder" it, as Macbeth's sins did his sleep. It was often very difficult to "knit up the ravell'd sleeve of care," with enemies of sleep like these haunting one's bedroom.

St. Paul discovered as he was setting out on his labors that he had to do his life work with what the King James' translators called "a thorn in his flesh," but what is more exactly translated a "stake" driven into his quivering flesh. His "stake" was not something that came late in life. It came to him fourteen years before he wrote *Second Corinthians*, and therefore it probably recurrently covered the whole period of his missionary labors. He had to discover in patience and endurance how to have Christ's power "made perfect in weak-

ness," and he had to learn to say of this trouble, as he did of his many other hindrances, "none of these things unsettles me."

I have never learned to love pains and I find it difficult to sympathize with that ascetic spirit which has made so many saints seek the agony and torture of self-inflicted pain. But I can well believe that our lives here on earth have been immensely enriched by the pain and suffering which lie unsought across our track. Not to know the ministry of pain would have meant for me, I feel sure, loss of capacity for genuine sympathy. If Dante had not suffered we should have missed the greatest Christian poem of the ages.

There is in one of the galleries of Milan a touching detail in a well-known picture of the crucifixion by an old master, which shows a little innocent cherub who has flown down from heaven and is pressing his forefinger on one of the thorns of Christ's crown, so that he may feel what pain is like and thus may learn its lesson. The tiny angel somehow felt that he could not have the fulness of life without understanding the meaning of pain. I should not, like this cherub, have gone out to seek for pain—there surely was never any need in my case to go hunting for it—but I can say that its ministry has been one of the deepest and richest that has come into my life. Without it I should have

been, I am afraid, a selfish, narrow being, absorbed in little ends of personal pleasure. I cannot see, as I look back over the pain-charts, that these thorns in the flesh have hampered my work or limited my range in any serious degree. I doubt if anybody works quite as effectively while he is in the grip of a good orthodox case of "shingles" as he would have done without the pain, and it must be admitted that lumbago does slow down the pace of life while the trouble lasts, but I think I can honestly say that I have made my life on the whole count for more than it would have done if I had been *bien né* and could have lived without pains and twinges and *tic douloureux*. Those nights which were passed with little sleep did not hold me up, or slow me down. I fortunately discovered somewhere along my track the important secret that if one lies with muscles completely relaxed, with mind calm and serene, with spirit free from worry or fidgets and with life quietly committed to the Eternal Love that is underneath, the effect is just as restorative as sleep is. That shepherd Psalmist was speaking wisdom when he said, "Thou restoreth my soul."

The usual trouble with us is that we set up a great worry when we begin to realize that sleep is not coming to us. We say to ourselves: "What shall I do, with all the work and strain of to-morrow coming on, and no

sleep to prepare me for it! Oh, I shall be a wreck! Dear me, dear me, here it is two o'clock and not a wink yet!" Psychologically that state of mind, like an inferiority complex, defeats the very end in view. The strain, the tension, the anxiety keep the angel of sleep from perching on the eyelids. One prays frantically, "Dear God, give me sleep," and then, at least by the worried state of mind, says, "but I know it will not come!" And it doesn't. It may not come even with peace and expectation, but something just as good as sleep will come with that serene state of mind, for, as I have said, composure and relaxation bring restoration and preparation for tasks, even if physiological sleep is absent. How far this serenity and this calm are to be thought of as a religious feature and how far they are merely psychological, I leave for the experts to say. I only know that my faith in infinite Love and my conviction that I live in an environment of Spiritual Reality immensely helps me to attain the serenity and gives me an expectation of restoration.

But I am not advocating an easy Coué formula—"every day and every way better and better"—as an elixir for all diseases. Composure and serenity do not altogether expel poisons from the system and they do not always eliminate the noxious germs that cause our troubles. The writer of that great ninety-first Psalm did

not know about the subtle sources and the invisible foes when he wrote: "Thou shalt not be *afraid* for the pestilence that walketh in darkness nor the contagion that wasteth at noon-day." The absence of fear is a major device of safety, but it is not a substitute for the elimination of the microscopic source of the pestilence and the contagion. I was highly resolved to make use of every bit of scientific wisdom within my reach and to supplement serenity with skill and technique.

I had the good fortune to find a highly trained doctor in Philadelphia who diagnosed my asthma. He traced the primary basis of the trouble to the hairs and fine dust which come from horses and from some other sources, and which poisoned the delicate mucous membranes of nose and throat and finally produced nervous convulsions in the breathing tract. There were nasal pressures and congestions due to defective breathing spaces in the nostrils, and the doctor predicted that he could by an operation on the middle bone open the passage, relieve the pressure and obviate the danger of irritation from floating substances. He performed the operation with marked success and in time, by slow processes of adjustment, that heavy asthmatic load rolled off and left me a free and easy breather. The change was like coming up out of a deep underground mine and living on a mountain top. I suspect that



Enceladus, who seemed to be pressed down under Ætna, really had a bad case of asthma. By other kinds of skill and technique most of the rheumatic handicaps let go, and left me free, while diet and regimen have made it quite possible to keep house with what indigestion remains. Serenity may not conquer asthma, but it does work mightily on nervous indigestion.

In 1900 I began to play golf, at first on the college grounds where the "greens" were largely imaginary, and a little later on the grounds of the Saint David's Golf Club. Dr. Francis B. Gummere, of literary fame, was my usual companion in the game. It would be difficult to conceive of a more congenial man with whom to play that noble game. The air, the sport, the competition, the wit and humor, the flow of talk, were the best medicine in the world. Sometimes it was David Irons of Bryn Mawr College who joined me. Sometimes it was Dr. Don C. Barrett or Dean Palmer of Haverford. Always it was fellowship plus the game, and my only drawback was the difficulty in maintaining serenity when the game was "off" and the strokes mounted too high. I owe golf a large debt.

Five times I have been on walking trips in Switzerland, four of the times in these middle years, and each time with companions of the most delightful quality. We did not try the highest mountains, but we crossed

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the most famous passes, and we went up the Schilthorn, the Faulhorn, the Zäsenberg, the Frohnalp, twice over the Gemmi, the Riffelalp, the Scheideggs, Mürren, the Rigi and many other moderate climbs. Here once more, fellowship together with the stimulus of the air and the inspiration of the beauty made these journeys on foot forever memorable.

One of my best-loved illustrations came from one of these journeys. After a day on Pilatus I walked alone up the Engelberg Valley to wait for my friends at Engelberg. I found that the native people all called the place where the valley terminated, "the end of the world"—*das End der Welt*. The two great shoulders of the valley run along each side of the little river which drains the region, and then there rises at the terminus of the valley a sheer mountain wall which stops all further progress. All other roads may lead to Rome but this Engelberg road certainly does not. It leads no whither. It ends there. It is a *cul de sac*. It seems to me to symbolize universal experiences. How often we have all found ourselves at places where the road ended, where a semaphore seemed to drop down in front of us, indicating "full stop," "no thoroughfare." It is a rare person who has not more than once been to "the end of the world," where the well-known road he was traveling came to a complete terminus.

I found, however, some distance farther back in the valley, a zigzag footpath of little promise, but I walked up this path, curving back and forth, for a whole afternoon, and I went on higher up over "the end of the world." I have always found life to be like that. What at first seems to be the end of the world is, in fact, not a final terminus. There is a way, usually hard, steep and zigzag, where one walks panting, which goes higher up, over the end of the world and over all the no-thoroughfare semaphores. Is there any terminus that does not have a way higher up which goes over it?

There is another illustration of a different order which I always associate with the walks over the Gemmi. I have on these trips twice been through Kandersteg on the way to the western end of the pass. The incident in mind connects with Kandersteg. A traveler on a road some distance from this town stopped a little boy and said to him: "Where is Kandersteg, my little fellow?" "I do not know," the boy answered, "I was never there. But *that* is the road that goes to it." There are other things besides Kandersteg to which that boy's wisdom applies. "I haven't been there yet, but that is the right way toward the haven where one would like to be."

Three times I have been on similar trips to the Canadian Rockies. The first time I climbed Abbott's

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Pass with my friend, Alden Sampson, going up from Lake Louise on the Fourth of July. It was the stiffest climb I ever made, and it could not have been done without the imported guides who conducted us over the dangerous crevasses which beset the way. We were the first climbers of that year and the crevasses were covered with snow. If we had been unguided we should have walked straight into them. But the guides with expert eyes could detect a curvature in the snow which warned them that deep pitfalls were hidden underneath the slight drop in the snow. They also saved us from the peril of avalanches from the mountains overhanging the pass. It was from one of these peaks that young Abbott, from whom the pass is named, fell to his death a few years before our climb was made.

The second trip was made in company with Sir George Newman and Arnold Rowntree. We were joined on various climbs in the neighborhood of Lake Louise by Francis Wylie (now Sir Francis), formerly secretary of the Rhodes Scholarship Commission, by William Adams Brown of Union Theological Seminary and by one of my beloved students, Robert Miller. One incident I remember of Sir Francis Wylie which could probably not have been matched by any other man in the British Isles. I promised to make out for Sir George Newman a list of the capitals of all the States in the

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Union. I remembered them all except four, which I could not dig up out of any of the strata of my memory. I showed the list to Mr. Wylie. Instantly out of his wise head he supplied the four missing capitals and knew every one in the entire country. As we were starting from the hotel on one of our walking trips, I overheard one of the hotel guests, who was in awe of titles, say to a neighbor, as he pointed to our knight, Sir George Newman, "There goes Sir Isaac Newton!"

We walked over the mountains from Field into the Yoho Valley, explored it from end to end and climbed back over the mountains to that glorious spot, Emerald Lake. We had experiences with bears and their cubs, with snow and rain, with cold and heat, with infected wells and defeated pioneer settlers, with land speculators and the hair-raising tales of the early explorers. We saw huge cities that had leaped into being, and we visited a new-born university in the far-away fringes of civilization. We lived thrillingly and dangerously on that memorable journey and we came back with the great Northwest built into our imaginations and with its air in our lungs, and some of its rugged strength in our fiber.

What I have been endeavoring to say is that the "broken wheel" has not prevented me from drawing water from the wells of life. I have always seized every



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known opportunity to repair "the wheel" and to keep the spring of water flowing. Health is an immense blessing. It is a spring of optimism and joy and it ought never to be carelessly thrown away. But I want to bear a testimony that a life of joy and hope, and of some service, can be attained even when health has been a good deal impaired. And I have further been pointing out that there is more than one trail toward restoration, though serenity is the major clue to the track.

I like to think, as I have pointed out in an earlier chapter, of salvation as complete spiritual health. It seems to me that Christ, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, thought of salvation as fulness of life, living *abundantly*. It was life brought up to its full normal functioning, with its capacity for love and beauty, and truth and goodness expanded and brought into action. This normal health of the soul means, of course, that one is living and breathing in correspondence with the environment of the soul, which is God.

One of the psalmists who wrote under the influence of the Scribes and who seems to fall easily into the tone of the legalism of his period, but who nevertheless occasionally reached a great prophetic height of vision, said, "*I will eagerly obey Thee, for Thou dost open up my life.*"<sup>1</sup> Religion means many things, and it does

<sup>1</sup> Moffatt's Translation of Psalm CXIX, 32.

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## "THE WHEEL BROKEN AT THE CISTERN"

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many services for us, but this is surely one of its major ministries to us. It opens up our life. It brings depth and amplitude. It restores us and brings us to our full normal health of life.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE WAY FORWARD IS BY AN INWARD PATH

IN the winter of 1905-06 I set to work seriously and systematically on what was for many years to be my *magnum opus*. It was to cover the complete history of the Quaker movement from its birth to the year 1900, and the series of volumes was further to include a history of the mystical and semi-mystical movements which preceded the rise of Quakerism.<sup>1</sup> I endeavored in every possible way in this historical work to carry out the plans and ideals of my friend, John Wilhelm Rowntree. Nobody ever can be a substitute for another personality and nobody can construct the unfinished window in Aladdin's Tower the way Aladdin himself would have made it. We had originally planned that I should do the historical work on mystical movements, and that he should do the entire history of Quakerism, for which

<sup>1</sup> The complete series includes the following volumes: *Studies in Mystical Religion; Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries; The Beginnings of Quakerism*, by William Charles Braithwaite; *Second Period of Quakerism*, W. C. Braithwaite; *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, by R. M. Jones, assisted by Isaac Sharpless and Amelia M. Gummere; *The Later Periods of Quakerism*, 2 Vols. by R. M. Jones. All of the sections of the series contain Historical Introductions by the editor, connecting the series into one organic whole.

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he was admirably fitted and qualified. His death came as a staggering blow, but those of us who loved him as though he were a part of our being, resolved that in some fashion at least the work of his life should go on. His father, Joseph Rowntree, made a generous financial provision for all secretarial help that would be needed, for the purchase of source books, for necessary travel in connection with the research and for the promotion of the publication of the Series. During the sixteen years of labor on this vast undertaking I had the constant advice, counsel and intimate friendship of this unique man, who lived to see the work completed.

William Charles Braithwaite, who wrote two of the most important volumes of the Series, proved to be a historian of a high order, possessed of remarkable insight, patience in research, fidelity to truth, genuine historical imagination and sympathetic understanding of the characters whom he interpreted. Our friendship during these years of coöperative labor is indeed a precious memory. He, too, lived just long enough to see the last volumes of the Series come from the press, when

On a vaster sea his sail  
Went beyond our beck and hail.

All this historical research had to be carried on while I was doing full professorial work in college and was

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## THE TRAIL OF LIFE IN THE MIDDLE YEARS

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editing a weekly periodical which involved extensive correspondence and travel. I was able, however, with the financial assistance of the Rowntree Fund to collect a splendid library of mystical books, so that I could go steadily on in my own home with my reading for the first volume. By the spring of 1908 I had most of the chapters of this first volume blocked out and in draft. The most important chapter in the book, the study of "The Friends of God," was already quite thoroughly developed, though I went to Strasbourg later and examined the nineteen little books which form the most important literary contribution of any single group of the Friends of God.

In April of this year, 1908, I went to England with my wife and daughter and settled in the interesting town of Charlbury, within easy reach of Oxford. We attended London Yearly Meeting, which was held that year in Birmingham, on which occasion I gave the first of the series of "Swarthmore Lectures." I attended two short summer schools and gave brief courses of lectures. But most of the time during that spring and summer I worked diligently in the Bodleian Library on my mystical research. It would be difficult to imagine a more interesting combination of favorable circumstances than a delightful home in the famous old Sturge House in Charlbury, and the treasures of the Bodleian at



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one's hand. I had the assistance of an excellent stenographer and copyist, with the further privilege of printing individual chapters to submit to experts for advance criticism. By the end of the summer I had my volume practically finished and I had the satisfaction of a contract for publication with the London House of Macmillan and Company when I sailed for home in the autumn. The work on the proofs took almost a year, and the book in its present form appeared in 1909.

As my major contribution during my life has been the interpretation of mystical religion, with its bearing on human life and thought, I shall tell very simply in this chapter what this type of religion has meant to me. I had already before this written a section on mysticism in each of my earlier books, *A Dynamic Faith*, and *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, and a third little book, entitled *Double Search* (London and Philadelphia, 1906), was in the main a study of the way in which the life of God and the life of man are bound together in mutual inter-relationship. I had also edited the *Journal* of George Fox in reduced and abbreviated form, with introduction and footnotes, entitled, *The Autobiography of George Fox*, and in this work I had pointed out how profoundly mystical this great founder of the Quakers had been, and how deeply the entire Quaker movement was tinged with a mystical quality.

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I began my studies of mysticism actuated at first by my interest in it as a historical phenomenon, but I soon discovered that it was the heart and essence of any religion for which I supremely cared. After one of my early lectures at a Summer School a lady threw me into a state of surprise by asking me how long I had been a "mystic"! She might almost as well have asked me how long I had been a "saint"! At that stage I thought both of saints and mystics as beings who lived in by-gone ages. You read about them, studied them as research problems, but you did not dream of being one yourself. I suppose no person has ever thought of himself specifically as a "mystic." There is no *genus mysticus*. The word as we use it to-day is a modern word, and does not yet stand for a well-marked or a well-defined individual person. There is no calendar of mystics.

What one would say, however, is that there is a characteristic type of religion, recognizable in all the great religions of the world, which may well be called mystical devotion, and I should not hesitate now to align myself with that type of faith and devotion. It takes on many variations in different lands and in different historical periods. Its aims and its central meaning will reveal the intellectual color of any given epoch, as every aspect of human life does, but the essential char-

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acteristic of it is the attainment of personal conviction by an individual that the human spirit and the divine Spirit have met, have found each other, and are in mutual and reciprocal correspondence as spirit with Spirit. In short, mystical devotion means direct first-hand fellowship with God, and the deepened life-results which emerge.

We all begin life by simply living, not by following a program or a theory or a system. The roots of life are too deep for diagnosis. They escape our analysis. We follow the push of a life-impulse. There is a vital urge which carries us forward. The little lips of the baby feel the mother's breast and the right action follows. Correspondence with environment is life's main miracle. There is a fit of inner and outer, like that of hand and glove. But from the first the approach is deep, hidden, uncogitated, mystical. The outer world presents its stimulus, sometimes as gentle as the vibrations of light, or the touch of a soft finger, and the response comes from within with infallible skill and with an untaught wisdom which may as well as not be called a "mystical" correspondence. So, too, with the birth of religion. There is here once more a within and a without, a tiny finite being and a Beyond, a spiritual center and a vaster environment, and they feel and find one another as the retina does light, or as the

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electrode finds its polar mate. It begins, as life does, not with a scheme or a theory, but with living and being and responding. In short, both life and religion are rooted in mystical experience, mystical process.

There are, of course, all degrees of intensity and of attainment, as is true of any supreme human undertaking. As this purpose to find God for one's life aim is man's highest undertaking, it would naturally be expected to run through a wide gamut. It may begin, as in St. Augustine's case, with the discovery that our hearts are restless and that only one Reality in the universe will still that restlessness. It may appear as an exalted aspiration for personal contact with God as in the cry of the Psalmist: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." It may be the victorious flight of the soul from all earthly nests of ease and from all its secular perchings on things that perish to find the One Eternal Reality for which it was made. Or it may be the quiet discovery that one does not need to go somewhere, with chariots, or ships or feet, or wings, since God is more truly like our spirits than like anything else in the universe, not remote, or absentee, close as breathing, the normal environment of the soul, and therefore a real Presence to be found and known and loved, as the swimmer

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finds the ocean. And this attitude of faith may rise, as it does with me in my best and sanest moments, to a joyous consciousness of acquaintance, fellowship and love. Sometimes it is a flash of sudden insight, sometimes it is a quiet assurance, sometimes it is an unspeakable joy in living, sometimes it is a dim awareness of a resource to live by and to draw upon for action.

It brings a sense of "at homeness" in this strange world. Nobody ever said this better than did that great mystic who wrote "the blessing of Moses" in Deuteronomy: "The eternal God is our home and underneath us are everlasting arms." It is the consciousness of "belonging," of being "no longer strangers and sojourners," as St. Paul discovered, "but fellow-citizens with the saints in the household of God . . . builded together into a temple for the habitation of God in the Spirit." Margaret Prescott Montague in her remarkable little book, *Twenty Minutes of Reality*, describes the experience as "beholding life for the first time in all its young intoxication of loveliness, in its unspeakable joy, beauty and importance."

The true secret seems to be found in the closing of chasms and cleavages. The divided will, the divided mind, the divided heart become fused into a unity. The antithetic parts of the self, which were in a state of "civil war," become one harmonious whole. The entire



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inner being ceases its usual cross-road dilemmas and goes in *one* direction, straight forward. But even more important than this healing of inward breaches in the soul is the discovery of the conjunctness of God and man in a union of love and fellowship above all divisions. The divided life, the sundered self, the isolated ego, cannot be at peace. It cannot be "saved" in any true sense, while it is away from home in a far country on the other side of a wide canyon of separation from God. Nobody ever saw that truth more clearly than St. Paul did. "Saw it" is the right word, because what men usually call his "theology," his "system" was first of all an experience of life. He vividly saw and felt. To read forensic theological theories into Paul's throbbing letters is to miss the main artery by which he lived.

His doctrine of salvation is the outgrowth of his own personal experience of a mystic union through Christ, a union which does away with the "middle wall of partition" and brings together in an at-onement of reconciliation the two that were before separated by a chasm. "It is no longer I (the separate ego)," he says in one of his most striking autobiographical passages, "that live, but Christ liveth in me (by a mystical union), and the life I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) Here in this marvelous

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experience of union through love, one finds himself in the sphere of life, not in the realm of logical theory.<sup>1</sup>

I wrote these following words in 1908: "There are times when the total underlying whole of consciousness (I should now say of 'our inner central being') comes into power in us in unusual fashion, when the stored-up gains of a lifetime are at our command, and we seem to possess ourselves even down to the roots of our being. In truth we are aware of a More than 'ourselves' impinging on the skirts of our being. There is no time in our lives, of course, when we do not draw upon this wider consciousness (or inner central being), which is the matrix in which our ideas and concepts (and ideals) are born. We are all aware how often we arrive at conclusions and actions without reasoning or thinking; how often we deal wisely with situations without being able to trace the source of our wisdom. The supreme issues of life are settled for us, all the way up and down the scale by unreasoned adjustments, by intents rather than contents of consciousness, by value-responses which far overflow any knowledge explanation which we can give. It may, I think, be said,

<sup>1</sup> I gave four lectures on *The Mysticism of St. Paul and St. John* at the Scarborough Summer School of 1901. They were published in *Present Day Papers* for 1902. They lack exact and technical New Testament scholarship, but they were originally written under the direction and guidance of that remarkable New Testament scholar, Professor J. H. Thayer of Harvard, as a Thesis for an M. A. degree.

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that all great work, all work which has the touch of genius on it, comes from persons who in special degrees draw upon this matrix consciousness. Such persons feel often as though a Power not themselves were working through them; as though, without tension and effort, the creation at which they are working was 'given' to them or 'brought' to them. There are times, I repeat, when in extraordinary ways the dualistic character of ordinary thought is transcended and the soul comes into possession of itself as a whole, when all we have been, or are, or hope to be, becomes real; and not only so, but in these deeper reaches of experience some higher Power than ourselves seems to work with us and through us—a larger Life continuous with ourselves seems to environ us.”<sup>2</sup>

I have just come upon a passage in Lord Kelvin's *Address on Sir Isaac Newton* which finely emphasizes the way in which this “deeper matrix consciousness” in us operates. Lord Kelvin said: “Newton was accustomed to let his thoughts become so filled with the facts on which his attention was concentrated that the relation subsisting between the various phenomena dawned upon him, and he *saw it as if by some process of instinctive vision denied to others.*” (Italics mine.)

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Introduction to *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. xxiv, New York: The Macmillan Co. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

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That type of intuitive flash of insight of which Lord Kelvin speaks is so common to us mortals that I should not use the words "denied to others," though it is no doubt true that such experiences occur more frequently, or at least are more *significant*, in persons possessed of genius than in the common run of men. Professor Livingstone Lowes of Harvard has made an admirable study in recent times of these intuitive processes in the life and work of the poet, Coleridge, especially in the composition of "The Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan."<sup>3</sup> He reveals how the "deposits" from the reading of many books by the poet were integrated and fashioned in "the deep well" of his unconscious mind and then "emerged" ready-made and with the bloom of perfection upon them.

That remarkable personal document, *The Journal of John Woolman*, to which I have previously referred, gives impressive accounts of the silent, ineffable processes by which his soul was brought to inward unity, and then into living communion with "the pure Spirit of Life and Truth," by which this humble man means God. His most definite account of a mystical experience is one which he reports in his thirty-seventh year: "Being in good health and going to bed about the time usual with me, I awoke in the night and my meditations

<sup>3</sup> *The Road to Xanadu*.

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as I lay were on the goodness and mercy of the Lord; in a sense whereof my heart was contrited. After this I went to sleep again; in a short time I awoke; it was yet dark, and no appearance of day, or moonshine; and as I opened my eyes I saw a light in my chamber, at the apparent distance of five feet, about nine inches diameter, of a clear easy brightness, and near its centre the most radiant. As I lay still, looking upon it without any surprise, words were spoken to my inward ear which filled my whole inward man. They were not the effect of thought, nor any (conscious) conclusion in relation to the appearance; but as the language of the Holy One, spoken in my mind. The words were, CERTAIN EVIDENCE OF DIVINE TRUTH. They were again repeated exactly in the same manner, and then the light disappeared.”<sup>4</sup>

But behind that experience there had been months and years of quiet preparation and the gradual formation of a *sensitive spirit*. “As I lived under the Cross,” he wrote at an earlier period, “and simply followed the openings of Truth, my mind from day to day was more enlightened. . . . While I silently ponder on that change wrought in me, I find no language to convey to another a clear idea of it.”

The ineffable change that was wrought in him found

<sup>4</sup> Woolman's *Journal*, chap. IV.



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two forms of expression, not in words but in life. His spirit became consummately beautiful, and what he once called "glances of real beauty" could be seen on his face, though, like Moses, "he wist not that his face did shine." The white stone with the new name written on it became his. In the second place he became extraordinarily tender to all human need and sensitive, as an aspen leaf is to the breeze, to every breath of wrong done to man by man or by the society of men. Here was a mysticism—and it was the type to which I dedicated my life—which sought no ecstasies, no miracles of levitation, no startling phenomena, no private raptures, but whose overmastering passion was to turn all he possessed, including his own life, "into the channel of universal love."

Woolman expresses, both in spirit and in deed, better than any other single individual does, the ideal of Quaker mysticism. He carried farther than most have done the refining process which consumes the dross in cleansing fire, and leaves the spirit pure and unalloyed, utterly humble, and utterly freed from selfishness. At the same time there formed within him, not only a devotion, in fact a dedication, to the task of "pushing back the skirts of darkness and widening the area of light," but, what is more wonderful, an almost infallible wisdom and sureness of direction as to how the oppres-

sive burdens on human backs were to be removed. He is a shining example, and that is why I have selected him as my ideal, of how contact with God and correspondence with a spiritual environment, when one is ready to cut all cables and go the whole way under divine leadership, prepares the soul of a person for his mission and turns him into a sensitive organ of the Spirit here in the actual world where the tasks lie.

The anonymous "Friend of God" in the fourteenth century, who wrote the little golden book called *German Divinity* (*Theologica Germanica*), expressed the active aspect of the truest type of mysticism in the words, now very familiar, "I would fain be to the Eternal God what one's own hand is to oneself." I came upon this statement in my research studies and it burst upon me like a fresh revelation. "*The light,*" this same man wrote, "*is worth nothing without love.*" "Thanks be unto the man," this unknown "Friend of God" went on to say, "who is fit and ready to be a tabernacle of the Eternal Goodness and Godhead, *wherein God may exert His power and will and work without hindrance.*" His noble contemporary, John Tauler, put the same idea into the compact phrase: "No virtue is to be trusted until it has been put into practice."

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My historical studies made me feel convinced that this double aspect of life, contact with God inwardly felt and the formation through guidance of a sensitive organ of social service, had been the supreme mission of the Society of Friends in human history, and I went to work, eagerly but with some patience, to interpret that mission to my people in my generation. The sudden flowering out of a great service of love in the tragic period of the World War and its aftermath is one visible harvest of this mission, but it is not by any means enough to satisfy one's hope or one's passionate longing. The main body of the Society of Friends has not yet become awake, or conscious in any adequate way of either of these two aspects of mission. It drops so easily into the subordinate task, on the one hand, of preaching a sound theological plan of salvation for another world, or, on the other hand, of working with panting effort by committees and by resolutions, for a new world which is to be attained by economic and political reconstruction.

I have no scorn for either of these "remedies." The preaching of noble evangelists has undoubtedly raised the level of spiritual life in the world, and the promotion of right economic theory and of improved political action has advanced the liberation of man. The full

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liberation cannot be accomplished without such aids. But the true Quaker idea is something far greater and more unique, and the travail of my soul will not be satisfied until I see my generation awake to this higher mission, a mission which at the heart of it is *mystical*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE TREE OF LIFE

IN 1898 I was elected a Trustee of Bryn Mawr College. At that time the college was managed by the Board of Trustees, thirteen in number. It is now managed by a Board of Directors, twenty-four in number, elected by the Trustees, acting as the Corporation. This body of thirteen Trustees was a quite remarkable group of carefully selected Quakers, since under the will of the founder, Dr. Joseph Taylor, only members of the Society of Friends could be chosen for this position. I had watched the college buildings rise on the beautiful campus of Bryn Mawr during my senior year as a student at Haverford, and I had formed from the very first a keen interest in everything that concerned the life and growth of the new institution. I naturally felt an enthusiastic thrill to find myself at such an early age one of this select group of Trustees. I served for a number of years as Secretary of the Board. I was from the first a member of the Executive Committee and later its Chairman. Finally, though not in this middle period, I became President both of the Board of Trustees and



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of the Board of Directors, and as I write I am looking back over thirty-five years of intimate connection with both the inner and outer life of Bryn Mawr College.

During the entire period, which properly belongs here in the middle years M. Carey Thomas was President of the college, the creator, or at least the inspirer, of its architectural beauty, and of its unique intellectual standards. She was a person of creative educational leadership and she was endowed with rare qualities which may, I think, fairly be called qualities of genius. She possessed remarkable organizing powers, with an eye to minute details as well as to the remote end in view. She directed all matters both great and small. She was utterly fearless in her insistence upon high ideals of scholarship and in the maintenance of those ideals at all costs and all hazards. It called for unusual nerve to create the Graduate Department on an unprecedented scale of requirements and of financial expense, and it called for no less nerve to launch the extensive system of self-government for undergraduates. She revealed in a striking way her touch of genius in her selection of professors. She had a peculiar flair for discovering in advance the young scholar who was to develop into outstanding prominence in his field. The list of "hits" which she made is a quite amazing one. She was always and everywhere an impressive personality, an excellent

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speaker, a rare entertainer of guests, and gifted in her power to attract the interest of persons who had money to bestow on educational projects. She possessed an abounding vitality and vigor of life which astonished all who worked with her. There seemed to be in her a dowry of inexhaustible energy. If ever anyone's life was built into the very substance and structure, both visible and invisible, of an institution, "to go no more out," it can be said that Miss Thomas is forever an indissoluble part of Bryn Mawr College.

It may just as honestly be said that she was a difficult person to work with coöperatively. She always knew what she wanted; she was masterful; she produced a kind of august spell; she was an adept in the art of carrying her point and of getting what she was after; she had strong emotional forces behind her strong will, and she had the subtle advantage of being a woman, so that an encounter could never quite be that of "man to man"! And after all is said and done, she was apt to be right!

Well, for all those years I had constant dealings with her on major and minor concerns, for every matter of any importance in that period had to be acted upon either by the Board, or by the Executive Committee, and I found myself many times conscientiously lined up strongly against policies that she had determined upon.

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I spoke out boldly and frankly on issues of many types and many varieties. I went frequently to her house—the Deanery—and she came often to mine to thresh over projects and situations that had arisen or were to arise. I formed the habit in all these interviews of being utterly sincere and honest in my expression of judgment or opinion. She knew that I was never acting capriciously, or taking an opposing position arbitrarily. If one is to be of any value on a Board he must be a free agent, using whatever wisdom and intelligence he possesses, and not taking the rôle of a rubber stamp. We worked together on that basis. We came through those years of labor together, in spite of our many points of difference, with mutual respect and personal regard for each other. On the day of her retirement from the presidency of the college, Miss Thomas took my hand and said with feeling: "We have been through many difficult times together, sometimes we have been strongly opposed on issues about which we differed, but nothing has interfered with our friendly relationship, and we finish our work together in true friendship."

I cannot hope that I have contributed very much to the development of Bryn Mawr College, but there can be no doubt whatever that this connection of mine with the college has been of momentous significance to my life and to my intellectual development. In the first

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place, the intimate fellowship with this remarkable group of men and women was an inestimable privilege. Miss Thomas was a unique hostess and we usually dined with her in a body twice a year, if not oftener. As I lived close at hand I was often invited to meet distinguished guests and especially to dine with visiting ministers who were to speak in college chapel, so that I thus greatly widened out my circle of acquaintances and friends, and that, too, with exactly the type of persons I most enjoyed knowing.

Then, in the next place, my work on the Bryn Mawr Board brought me into close contact with almost all the problems and issues of higher education. One can, of course, take a perfunctory part on a Board of Management, act as an automaton and learn nothing from the procession of items which file by. But I did not do that way. I entered into the heart of the problems which came up for solution, as though my life depended upon them, and I accumulated insight and wisdom in the process. The experiences enriched my life and made me feel much more at home in the educational world.

I was, too, during all these years, a member of the Committee of Management of my old beloved preparatory school, in Providence, Rhode Island, Moses Brown School. At the change of administration in 1904 I had an intimate part in the important steps and changes

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which marked the coming of the new era in the life of this great school. I was too far away and too heavily absorbed to have anything like a guiding hand in its development, but I visited it often, followed each shaping movement in its progress with intense interest, and got, through this connection, something more than a superficial insight into the work and the ideals of secondary education. I wrote an editorial each year in *The American Friend* on Education, and I visited all the Quaker colleges, many of them frequently, entered into their problems, addressed the students, talked with individuals, met them in small groups and became intimately acquainted with the educational contribution of the Society of Friends in America. I was hardly less familiar with the educational work of the leading schools of the Society of Friends in England.

I have thus hastily referred to my first-hand contact with a number of lines of educational work, because this contact has been an important factor in the formation of my own methods and ideals as a teacher. It is a nice question whether a teacher is best prepared for his task by technical training in pedagogy, or by developing his own methods in ways that are unique and natural to him in the laboratory of his own classroom. The latter plan obviously involves a stage of "muddling through," of experimentation with early classes, of in-



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tellectual vivisection on the palpitating souls of youth, but for the person who potentially possesses decided teaching gifts it produces in the end, I believe, the better teacher, though probably no expert in pedagogy would admit it. I am so thoroughly committed to a propensity for the spontaneous, the natural and the free unfolding of inherent qualities of life that I vote strongly for the nontechnically trained teacher. In any case, I have always been that kind of teacher. I have certainly improved in quality and skill with the years, but I am comforted by the fact that I cannot make myself believe that I did any very harmful vivisection of palpitating souls while I was learning.

I remember that Dante aspired to be a painter and that Michaelangelo aspired to be a poet, and I realize that no one can infallibly know what is his own major line of life, but I have always felt that I was at my best in a classroom, and there is no question that I am happiest when I am teaching a class of youth. However others may think of my vocation I like to think of myself as a teacher. I have never been adequately severe with my students in my demands for work outside the classroom, and consequently I have probably not given them a sufficiently gruelling intellectual discipline. But when it comes to the central business of making the students understand the work that is being handled in

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the classroom, there, I feel sure, I have succeeded. There has been no "forgotten man" in the class. I have always intended to have the "less favored" student, if there was one, *see* exactly what the lesson was about. Every step in the unfolding interpretation of the issues in hand has always been at every minute open to challenge from any member of the class, and the point in hand is not passed over until I am convinced that it is lucid enough for every man there to see its bearing and significance. I expect to have an evident sense of *rapport* in the class, so that a lecture is something more than a douche of words, sprayed out through a speaking tube. It becomes an interchange of thought, guided in a definite direction, but with living contact between mind and mind. A contemporary of the saint comments on the method of St. Francis by saying: "His style was not only that of a preacher but of a man conversing." It has in similar fashion been my ideal "to teach as a man conversing." The atmosphere of the room is charged with friendliness and coöperation, and if there are any degrees of friendly relations between professor and students it would be found that the bond of intimacy was not determined either by the saintliness of the student nor by his brilliance of mind. This intimate relationship with students has been one of my major joys in life, and I never go in any direction away from

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home without finding the affection of men whom I have taught.

But gradually, as the years passed, I became more and more impressed with the consciousness that our American education was, to far too great an extent, missing its aim; in fact, was all the time scoring failures with its successes. Each year the buildings and grounds, the external appliances, grew more and more splendid, while the actual *harvest*, in terms of culture and character, seemed to lag behind reasonable expectation. The top cream of any graduating class in school or college was all one could ask. There were always a few persons coming forward who had fine culture, real refinement, sound scholarship, solid character of excellent promise; but there was, unfortunately, a large output of pattern-stamped, factory-made graduates, who had a veneer of education rather than a deeply inwrought culture, which affected the inmost life of the man or woman. And somehow in these years of training, in many American institutions, the *discipline* of the moral and spiritual life of the student seemed to have been overlooked. In short, educational institutions in America seemed to me to be fine in every particular except the crucial one, that they failed in large degrees to *educate*.

My annual editorials on Education in *The American Friend*, usually in August, reveal this sense of

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disillusionment and wonder. Much of what I wrote bore especially upon the work and quality of our Quaker institutions, but I was all the time conscious that these institutions were probably above the average cultural level of the regions where they were located. Here is a short specimen of the kind of diagnosis I made from time to time. This is from the vintage of 1906:

"It is never pleasant to write in a pessimistic vein, nor do I enjoy dwelling on points of weakness. But it is an editor's duty to be frank and honest, and to make his readers *think*. One year ago we pointed out that our educational institutions were not contributing as much as we seemed to have a right to expect of them, to the development of our branch of the church. That feeling has grown upon us during the present year. It is a problem to be squarely faced by all who are interested in our future. We now have eight colleges and a very large number of schools, seminaries and academies under our care. It is safe to say that no other religious denomination in America, with a membership under a hundred thousand, has anything like the same educational assets.

"But in spite of this favorable situation, whenever we sit down in the calm and count up our jewels we cannot but feel that the results are less than we ought to expect. We are not an educated people. We have a great lack of well-trained leaders and we are producing

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a meagre amount of illuminating religious literature. No one can attend an American Yearly Meeting—it makes no difference which one—without noting that there are at present few real thinkers, few who can produce an edifying epistle, few who can strike out on any constructive line of advance, few who could preach a sermon worth preserving and circulating. The educational facilities of English Friends are insignificant compared with ours. Nevertheless, they are altogether in advance of us in mental grasp, in constructive power, in efficiency of public service and in the range of their influence upon society.

“When a call comes for a large, well-trained man for some important situation we are always humiliated to see how few persons there are who can even be considered. Our institutions are full of boys and girls, and yet the dearth of trained, consecrated men and women, of fearless spirit, of high ideals and of passionate devotion continues. It is a situation which should not be ignored, and it seems to me a crucial problem. Our educational forces must somehow be made to bear more directly upon creative and constructive results.”

These words were simple and restrained, but they conveyed what seemed to me the truth. They touched lightly, but they touched a sore spot in the religious body that was concerned. And if that situation was true



of the green tree, how much more was it discoverable in the dry one! In fact, wherever one looked in those years of peace and plenty it was possible to find that same sore spot, though nearly everyone was saying, "How wonderful is our American education, with its spacious schools and its highly equipped colleges and laboratories, filled with students from the farms and from the cities!" What I profoundly felt was that the youth of our country were eating freely of *the tree of knowledge*, but they were not being made partakers of *the tree of life*. They were not being trained and disciplined in the supreme art, the art of living. A great stream of boys and girls from the city and the country was year after year flowing on through the schools and colleges, like a beautiful phenomenon of nature. It was a happy, joyous group, with their open-air life, their eagerness for sports, their leaping cheer-leaders. The discoveries of the new age were passed before them like a moving panorama in classrooms and laboratories. Information, facts, laws, hypotheses filled their notebooks and were passed back to the professor at examination time to show that they had indeed eaten of this tree of knowledge. But it somehow just missed being *education*, it fell short of real *culture*. It was intellectual food, but ill-digested. They ate a-plenty of mental pabulum, but they did not, in Robert Browning's

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phrase, turn it into "comfortable kyle" and get it circulating in the blood-stream of their life.

There was always in every institution a small number of persons who really and truly *arrived*. Finely educated, beautifully molded, genuinely cultured persons emerged in the onflowing stream. There are always some rare persons who grow, develop and flower out into refinement and into robust qualities of life almost regardless of the system of education in vogue, and in seeming defiance of all attempts to pattern-stamp them with the brands and molds that are popular at the time. But, on the whole, it must be honestly said, I think, that the mass education which prevailed during my middle years was thin and superficial and extremely weak in character-making power. This is not a retrospective view. It is what I thought, and in a mild way said, at the time. It is, however, vastly easier to be critical than it is to be constructive. I saw the weaknesses and the defects, but I did not come forward with a creative program which could inaugurate a new world. What I did do, however, though only feebly, was to point out that the prevailing emphasis in educational methods, was the conquest of the outer world of fact and law and system, with, at the same time, extremely feeble concern for the *meaning and value and significance of life*. A young person was apt to come back

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from college with a head full of upsetting facts, but with no training which enabled him to fit into the web and tissue of human living in a family group, a church fellowship, a civic world, a national spirit. He had to a large degree severed the deep-lying bonds which made him conjunct with a living world, and he was adrift in an artificial or constructed thought-world. I have been busy through all the years that have followed, endeavoring to bring up the constructive aspects of education, but that is a later story and does not belong here. It will at least be a valiant step forward if we can all realize that the *tree of knowledge* is not the same thing as the *tree of life*, and that education involves partaking of both trees.

Instead of promulgating a cut-and-dried educational theory I endeavored slowly and experimentally to exhibit in my classroom a vital educational method both for the mind and for the inward springs of life of those whom I taught. I have always felt that the cultivation of imagination was at least as important as the discipline of facts. I have persistently aimed to awaken new interests or to quicken old ones, and to help my men to discover what they really *want* and to kindle their aspiration for an abundant life.

Throughout these middle years of life the Haverford students attended a meeting on Thursday morn-

ings held after the manner of Friends, on a basis of silence. That means that it began with hush and quiet, with no program, no arrangement. The occasions were often highly favored, with depth and power and inner flow of life. I frequently spoke at some time during these meetings, briefly, concisely, and always with an aim to interpret some aspect of life which would come to the students with freshness and reality and at the same time with practical application to their everyday life. It used to be said by President Hadley of Yale that no souls were saved after the first twenty minutes of speaking. In any case, I seldom spoke that long, for I formed the habit of not wasting a word and of coming to an end when the definite point in my mind had been presented.

Gradually calls began to come to me to give religious messages to students in other institutions, though it was a long time before I felt at home and had the same sense of freedom and life in other places as I did at Haverford. In fact, it was not until the Great War was over and I was already beyond my middle years that I went out with real joy to college and university chapels.

Harvard was one of the earliest universities to invite me to this service. I hesitated long before accepting the invitation. It seemed at first like a break with my

Quaker traditions. I could not sit in silence in a Harvard Chapel and wait until a message should seem to come spontaneously, and my lips be mysteriously *moved* to open. No audience of students, I knew, would patiently wait for "movings." I faced all the issues and felt clear in my mind, as I meditated, that the most important aspect of a message was not its sudden and spontaneous character, but its freshness, its essential vitality, its power of appeal, its quality of *reality* and its fitness for the occasion. I accepted the call, went to the university, took my place with the long line of university preachers in Appleton Chapel. My first experience was not quite free from anxiety, timidity and self-consciousness. But I gave some vital messages to the men and I felt a quiet faith that with the deepening of my life and with the formation of new habits and manners some day in the future I might feel at home in the field of student preaching. How much of it was to fall to my lot, of that I had, in the ante-bellum years, as yet no dream.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE FAR END OF THE MIDDLE PERIOD

DANTE considered thirty-five years the middle of his life—*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*—though in his case it did not prove to be the middle point. I have been thinking in these chapters of the period between thirty and fifty as my middle years. The only birthday that ever brought depression to me was my fiftieth one. It shook me awake to the fact that I was no longer young, that I had spanned half a century, that time was galloping on, and that I had better now be ready to do that for which I was born and for which I came into the world.

William James had written in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*: "We and God have business with each other; and in opening ourselves to His influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled. The universe at those parts of it which our personal being constitutes takes a turn for the better or for the worse in proportion as each one of us fulfills or evades God's demands." I always knew that the goal of life was not talking, or thinking, or writing, but *being* and *doing*. And I dimly felt that these fifty years were a preparation for

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a piece of work which God had for me to do. What that would have been if the world had continued on its old track I do not know, for there came a terrific jolt, the old track ended, and unexpected issues emerged. And I found my peculiar task.

There is little more to say about the trail in the middle years. In 1911 I spent the spring and summer with my family in Germany, in the picturesque old university town of Marburg. I had a course of lectures in the university under that great teacher, Professor Wilhelm Herrmann, then at the height of his intellectual and spiritual powers, but I spent most of my time gathering the material for my *Spiritual Reformers* who were the actual forerunners of the Quakers. The movement had its birth in Germany, but it broke out almost simultaneously also in France, Holland, Italy and Spain, and only a little later in England. It was a unique blending of mysticism, typically that of "the Friends of God"; humanism, that interpreted by Erasmus, and of the reforming spirit incarnated in the young Luther of his hero period (1515-1525).

The desire to liberate man's spirit from the load of ecclesiasticism and dogma formed the heart of the movement, and rose to a passion in the lives of the exponents of it. These men wanted a reformation which should fulfil the hopes and expectations of the great

mystics of the fourteenth century and of the religious leaders of the renaissance of the fifteenth century, with its central aspiration focussed upon the abundant life of man. They had such utter faith in the continual presence of the living Christ in the hearts of men that they supposed that everybody would rise to their inherent divine possibilities, if they were once liberated from the shackles of the past. Christ's promise that the Spirit of Truth would guide men into all the Truth formed the center of their faith, and they proposed to reform the Church and refound the world on the lines of that faith. They were resolved to have an invisible Church guided by the Spirit, not a visible church controlled by officials and ecclesiastics. They were simple-minded men, artless and naïve. They had the Franciscan spirit, though, unlike St. Francis, they were scholars and had university training. They belong in the list of those men whom William James called "tender-minded." They kept very much of the child spirit in the midst of a very rough and stormy epoch. They would not cry, nor lift up their voice in the street. They were forever done with fighting and would have none of it, even to save their lives or to bolster their cause. They were disciples of the Galilean and they were resolved to win their cause in His way, or, if that were impossible, then to "lose" it in His way.

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These men profoundly attracted me and interested me, and I set myself to interpret them, their movement and their influence, which I did in *The Spiritual Reformers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century* (London, 1914). Men who champion "lost causes" are apt to be neglected and forgotten, and I had to search the libraries from one end of Germany and Holland to the other to find the copies of their little books and tracts which had escaped the fires to which their writings were usually doomed.

But it is a question whether there are any "lost causes" in this world. In any case, this was not one of the causes that was "lost." Though it was submerged for a long time when, like Arethusa, it reëmerged under a new name and in another land. Ernst Troeltsch<sup>1</sup> and I were at work simultaneously on this "submerged movement," but except for our books it has received scant attention from historians, though single individual leaders of the movement have been rescued from oblivion. Some day these heroes of "a battle lost and of a cause won" will have their story adequately told. In any case, I am glad to have discovered that trail and to have spotted some of the trees which mark it, where once there was nearly impenetrable forest.

<sup>1</sup> Troeltsch's book is entitled: *Die Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (1911). *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, translated by Olive Wyon (New York, 1931).

I had the interesting experience of being suspected as the person who stole Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" from the Louvre. The afternoon of the day on which the loss of the painting was discovered I had to pass through the border between Switzerland and Germany. Every custom barrier had been notified to be on the watch for the thief. I had bought a birthday present for my wife which had been wrapped so that it made a flat package almost precisely the size of the stolen "Mona Lisa." I had not heard yet of the theft, and could not imagine why I was given such a fierce overhauling when I innocently endeavored to pass with my precious birthday gift. The next morning when I read the news I understood why I had been "run in" and searched.

We lived in Marburg in the oldest house in the ancient city and there were in it still the relics of an underground tunnel which had once connected it with the Castle which towered above it. We were guests in the home of Herr Superintendent Happich, pastor of the Pfarrkirche, one of the famous churches of the city, and superintendent of the churches of Hesse. There was a striking saintly quality in this fine scholar and preacher, and his wife possessed a refined and beautiful spirit. Our life with them was an unalloyed satisfaction, and has always been a happy memory. But one



thing marred the summer. Every conversation with Herr Happich indicated that he expected war and saw no escape from it. He was a saint at every point but one. When political subjects came to the front he suddenly became a disciple of Thor. He understood better than I did the state of mind in Europe which made him feel certain that war was inevitable.

On our return from the Continent I attended a remarkable Young Friends' Conference in Swanwick, England, where the topic uppermost in the minds of these young Friends was what attitude they would take in the next war which already seemed to *them* to be inevitable. What struck me most forcibly was the almost unanimous resolve of that group that under no circumstances would they have any part in a coming war, nor would they make any compromise with military demands upon them. In both countries as early as 1911 I saw the cloud of war well above the horizon, and a vast storm already forecast.

In the autumn of 1912, I resigned my task as editor of *The American Friend* and turned the paper over to a Board of Publication appointed by the Five Years Meeting. Herman Newman had been my able editorial assistant, and for several years he had taken much of the burden of the work off my hands, but the sense of responsibility remained, and I was convinced

that the time had now come for me to turn my energies unhindered in another direction. For nineteen years, week after week, with hardly ever a break, I had written messages to my readers and had faced the issues of the time. I did not carry conviction to all minds. I always had a few stern critics dogging my path, but in the main I kept my constituency and I had my readers with me in spirit.

Once when I went, on invitation, to give an address at a large gathering of Friends a member of the group who strongly disapproved of my position broke the period of silent worship, which came before I was introduced, with a vocal prayer that began with the words: "Thou knowest, O Lord, that now we are about to hear a great many things that are not so!" At another meeting after I had given an address which seemed to an unsympathetic woman Friend to be what might now be termed slightly "high-brow" in quality, she arose and said in a quavering voice: "Our dear Lord said feed my *lambs*. He did not say feed my *giraffes*."

One opposing critic printed a short pamphlet against me in red ink, and one minister, in the "trust-busting" period, visited all the subscribers in his community and urged them to stop taking *The American Friend* because it supported trusts! He based his charge on the

ground that we advertised the Provident Life and Trust Company and the Girard Trust Company! Another amusing incident may be given to illustrate how many of the subscribers took everything in the paper, including even the advertisements, as gospel truth. I was eating breakfast one morning in yearly meeting week in New England, when two women sitting opposite me at the table raised their hands in amazement and said, "Why, thou art drinking coffee!" as though they thought it poison. "Yes," I said, "I always drink coffee." "Dear me," the older woman replied, 'to think that we both gave up the coffee we so much loved because thy paper said that coffee was disastrous to health and life.' They had been reading the anti-coffee advertisements of "Postum," and had assumed that every word in the "ad" expressed the views of the editor, in whom they had the utmost confidence.

Through the attacks of my critics I discovered a new meaning in the words of Jesus, "Love your enemies." These attackers of mine rendered me an invaluable service. They kept me humble. They compelled me to think more clearly and to look more deeply into every side and aspect of the problems with which I was dealing, and they taught me how multiform human minds are, how varied are human needs, and how important it is to respect the heart-beat of the man who

does not belong to one's own school of thought. I should have come through these years a much narrower man if I had not learned through difficult experiences to love my enemies—who dared to tell me that there were other sides to the truths I was trying to interpret. I had sufficient indications to assure me of widespread love and confidence as I laid down my heavy task. One evidence of the confidence was the fact that I was chosen that same year to be Chairman of the Business Committee of the Five Years Meeting of 1912. This Committee had the most delicate and difficult matters under consideration referred to it for formulation. This position could not have been conferred upon me if there had been fears that I might be an unsafe guide, or suspicions that I might follow wandering fires. This experience of trust and confidence has established in me the conviction that one can stand honestly and uncompromisingly for progressive aims without disturbing the unity and integrity of a religious body.

In 1913 I undertook the editorship of an international Monthly Journal, which was to be a New Series of *Present Day Papers* originally edited by John Wilhelm Rowntree. I had a quite remarkable staff of co-editors in England and America and the efficient help of my brother-in-law, Henry J. Cadbury. The experiment was hardly more than launched when the World

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War broke upon us, and made it impossible to have our minds and hands free to carry on such an international undertaking. The Journal had not quite found its pace in the short period of its life, and I had not quite got my world view matured. It is not possible to tell now whether the Journal would have risen in time to a place of important religious leadership. The best of my editorials in *Present Day Papers* were later reprinted in my little book, *The Inner Life*, which attained a wide circulation.

As I look over the years from 1893 to 1914, when for most of us a new date was forever fixed in our calendar, I see standing out four peaks of truth which pretty clearly point the path of the trail which I was helping to make in these busy years. I helped many readers and hearers to pass over from the thought of God as a remote, far-away Being, who created the world at a definite time, working at it from outside, as a builder does, to a consciousness of God as living Spirit, a real Presence, a pervasive Life, an enveloping, environing Reality, in whom we live and from whom we draw our spiritual breath. When I was on a steamer one night in the Orient a flying fish, in an unusual rapture of flight, outdid himself and leaped from the crest of a wave to the deck of our ship. He instantly found himself out of his vital element. He flopped and gasped



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and found his wings useless. I picked up gently the beautiful creature, took him to the rail and dropped him into the sea. The moment he touched it he was at home again in his element, knew exactly what to do and recovered his life and normal action. He was in the environment for which he was made.

It is so with human souls. We cannot *live* stranded in a space-time framework isolated from the environment of the Spirit. We seek God, as Pascal so well said, because we have already in some sense found Him. We hunger for more of what we have already tasted. The soul gives its own native testimony to the fact of the immanence of God, but it is easy to fall back into the pictorial habits of childhood and to continue to think of God as "yonder," seated in the sky. This conception of God as remote carries with it a tendency to separate the "natural" and the "supernatural" into sundered compartments so that any divine action within this "lower" sphere becomes miraculous. God must "come" across the chasm of separation, or He must "interfere" with natural processes. And one of the saddest features of this scheme of division is the belief that we are banished at birth into an undivine world where we are "aliens."

I always felt that it was a serious part of my mission on earth to fight that spectre of the mind, and to testify

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to the fact that beauty, truth and love are "the harvest of the spirit," and that where they are, God is. There could be no permanent order, no universal law, no coherence, no evolving process, no goal or purpose, without an undergirding Mind. And there could be no spirits like ours, with our hungers, our urges, our aspirations, our transcendent ideals, our dedication to what never was on land or sea, if we were not linked and conjoined with one living unifying Spirit of whom we partake. But transcendence, as I early discovered, is certainly just as true of the divine Being as immanence is. Transcendence does not mean remoteness, nor does it mean that God is "absolute Other." It means that no possible manifestation exhausts His Nature, that beyond the revelation is still the Revealer. Spirit, even of our own human type, is essentially self-transcendent. No thought, or aim, or attitude, or achievement, adequately expresses our inner life. There is always more, always a beyond. We go on ahead of our attainment, and *we* ourselves are more than we say, or do, or think. Immanence and transcendence are two essential aspects of the one Reality, as indivisible as are the convex and concave sides of an arc.

1) Another truth which I endeavored to interpret, with vividness and reality, was the perfect union of the divine and human nature of Christ. When I began my

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work there were two well-known tendencies in evidence. On the one hand the divinity of Christ was emphasized to such an extent that His humanity was quite lost. He was thought of as a Being from another world, of another order, supernatural, mysterious, unlike us at every point. He was an unearthly visitor, a celestial being, not one of us in any sense. On the other hand there was the tendency to deny His uniqueness, to insist on a humanity for Him like ours, and to grant to Him nothing more. He belonged to our sphere, our order, our type. He was a highly endowed, prophetically gifted, man.

Here once more the real trouble lay in a misreading of the full truth of both the divine and the human. They were thought of as set over against each other, separated by a chasm. God over there yonder, and undivine man down here, so that if Christ belonged wholly to God He did not partake of this world, or if He belonged to our nature then He was "mere man" and could not properly be called divine. For me that "chasm" was unreal. God is and was always *here*. We have intimate commerce with one another. We could not be persons in any real sense without partaking of God, nor could He be really God and not share with us in grace and love and fellowship. He needs us and in a deeper sense we need Him. The Vine must have

branches to be a Vine. The terms human and divine are correlative, just as finite and infinite are. God's true nature and character as love and grace can be revealed to us only in the terms which fit our life sphere. We can discover power everywhere in nature. We can find beauty in sunsets and flowers and faces. But we can know what love and unselfish goodness are only through persons. Christ is the highest and completest person through whom these aspects of character have broken into manifestation in our world. He is as completely divine as He is completely human. He belongs as truly to us as He truly belongs to God. In Him we see what God is like and in Him we know at last what it means to be a completely normal human person.

4) Another impasse which seemed insoluble by human reason was the relationship between mind and body, spirit and matter. Confronted everywhere by the obvious reality of the physical which threatens to occupy the whole field, how can we maintain the genuine reality of anything spiritual, which appears to have no actual realm left for its being and no imaginable *form* of existence? Here once more the sharp duality proved untenable. The fact is that both realities are clearly and equally in evidence to our inner experience, and they are not militantly incompatible with each other. It seems absurd to deny reality to the spirit that is aware

of itself as knowing, and it seems equally absurd to deny reality to the stone over which we stumble or to the foot which stubs the stone. It is only by a subtlety of quibbles that we eliminate from our field either mind or matter. Even when we do eliminate *mind*, it is the mind that does the eliminating! The sharp division, with a chasm between the two, is a bad inheritance from Descartes, and does not fit either the new physics or the new philosophy of our time.

Matter on its upward slope is potentially spiritual, and spirit can and does operate through matter and can dominate and control it. They are not antithetical; they are correlative and coöperative. Mind everywhere is superimposed on matter as its base, and its manifestations of spirit break through matter, and matter lends itself to mind. The supreme characteristics of mind or spirit are intrinsic values. They are beauty, truth, love, and moral goodness. But supreme as they are in worth and glory, they nevertheless get expressed here in our world through material and temporal forms, and yet there is something *eternal* about them all. A person that can create these values and live in and through and by them is something more than a collocation of atoms in a space-time frame. There is an area of freedom, of uniqueness and of creativity in a person, and there is a revelation of a worth in personality which



implies eternal survival value—what is so excellent as that, as God lives, must indeed be permanent.

Personality seems to be the consummate crown of life, the goal of the whole cosmic process. To become a fully developed person is to approximate the life of God. The more we attain our true stature the more are we like the only Being in the universe who can say with finality, "*I am.*" But the richer the life becomes, the higher the level of realization that is reached, the more deeply is sacrifice involved in the very fiber of it. Consecration to the life of others lies at the very heart of all genuine personality, of all true life. "The suffering servant" is an eternal figure of the true course of life and of love.

The fourth peak of truth, which stands out most clearly in my thought, is my constant testimony through these years to a way of life that opens upward into vital contact and fellowship with God, and that brings, through a junction with the currents of the central Stream of Life, complete health and buoyancy to the soul. I shall take a brief final chapter to express more fully what I mean by this life which opens upward.

## CHAPTER XV

### HOW MAN'S DEEPEST DESTINY IS FULFILLED

I HAVE already in an earlier chapter quoted William James' impressive words: "In opening ourselves to God's influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled." Those words of this great teacher come nearer expressing the secret of my life than any other words of which I can think. Vital intercourse with God, quiet spiritual communion, the sense of guiding Presence, the reality of Eternal Love, the consciousness that in my best moments of life I am the organ of a divine purpose—those aspects of life have been as much a part of my essential being as breathing and as the beating of my heart have been. It is nothing less than the discovery of a deeper environment than the visible and tangible one—"a World within the world we see." The highest moments of life are surely those occasions when the individual soul is aware of a divine mutual and reciprocal correspondence with an environment of the Spirit. When this experience comes a person feels refreshed as by God's own breath. He passes from argument to quiet assurance and from the dusty road of words and talk to

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certainties of life. It is as though eternity broke into time and life overbrimmed with the fortification of invading energies.

There was no one supreme moment in my life when the fire fell and kindled the altar, though there were specific times during this middle period when very significant watersheds of life were crossed. I never had an experience like that well-known one, for instance, which was the turning point in the life of Sadhu Sundar Singh. At the crisis moment in this experience he crossed a great divide from which everything else could be dated. He says, "In the room where I was praying I saw a great light. I thought the place was on fire. I looked round but could find nothing. Then the thought came to me that this might be an answer that God had sent me. Then as I prayed and looked into the light, I saw the form of the Lord Jesus Christ. It had an appearance of glory and love."

There is no good reason for doubting that this remarkable and saintly man had this visual experience. The account could be paralleled from the lives of mystics in all ages. One has only to mention Isaiah, Ezekiel, St. Paul, St. Augustine and St. Francis of Assisi. I have never had anything quite similar to that, and I have had no desire for such startling psychic events. The nearest approach I have had, perhaps, to a star-

ting event of this type was a distinct *audition*, which I heard near the end of the period covered by this book. I was to give an important address in Boston on a certain Monday afternoon. I had spent much time preparing and had been anxious over it. On the Friday preceding, I took up the manuscript, which I was to use, for a last reading of it before I finally should give the address. As I took the manuscript from the drawer of my desk I distinctly heard a voice say to me, "But thou wilt never give it!" I was so startled by the voice that I dropped the paper and looked around to see if anybody could have spoken, and I even went out into the hall, wondering whether the voice was from the outside or from within.

I took the night train that same evening for Boston. On Saturday I had two public meetings, and two also on Sunday by previous arrangement. I was very much exhausted when the two days were over. I spent a quiet evening on Sunday with my hosts, and went early to bed. I woke up in the night extremely ill, and when morning came I found that everybody in the house had ptomaine poisoning. Everybody but myself slowly improved during the morning, while I steadily grew worse. At ten o'clock I was taken to the Bent Brigham Hospital. I told the doctors who served me that I had a very important address at two o'clock that day, which

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had been widely advertised, and that they must pull me into shape for that occasion. I was told that there was hardly a chance that I could stand on my feet at two o'clock, but they assured me that they would use all the skill they had to get me into form. I was put to bed with hot-water bags at the critical place, and was dosed with the proper remedies, and I was promised that at one o'clock I might try getting up to see if I could stand. At the right moment I launched forth from bed, and though wobbly on my feet, I was able to get dressed and to sit in a chair, though of course I was not allowed to eat.

At one-forty-five I took a car to the meeting place where I was to speak, and found an audience of nearly one thousand persons. I never quite knew how I got up the long aisle to the front, but I managed it somehow. The presiding officer introduced me, but I hardly heard his kind words, for I was lost in deep meditation and prayer for help. When he finished I rose and gave my address and then immediately withdrew. Throughout the suspense of the forenoon I had quite naturally reflected much upon the "voice" and its significance, but the consciousness of it, instead of depressing me and inclining me to surrender to the inevitable, had just the opposite effect. I highly resolved to put forth every human effort to fulfil my obligation to my promised



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engagement. I succeeded and did what I had set my face to do. The "audition" was due, I think, not to a special divine initiation, but to a subconscious morbid impulse of a tired man. In any case the experience made me cautious about accepting forthwith as divine any psychic event which may surge into consciousness. Divine intimations may very well come to us in these unusual ways, but I am convinced that God enters our life best through silent creative processes which draw upon all our powers of mind and will, and which work morally and spiritually rather than by a "spell."

The assurance of God as a present reality to live by ought not to be a momentary act, what I have called a magic spell, to which one ever after can refer as to a sort of Rubicon moment, standing out all alone in one's spiritual biography. I do not belittle the significance of those occasions, when the individual seems to himself to be singled out of all the world and brought to an intensity of contact, which results in visual or auditory experience of an unique sort. Such moments seem to those who have them to be of a supernatural order. The individuals who have these experiences feel themselves divinely "chosen" for a peculiar mission. The startling event marks a sharp break with the old life. They become "twice-born men." And these aspects are

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apt to produce a remarkable shift of level in such an individual's life. But psychologically such experiences fall into the class of well-known phenomena. They are no more "supernatural" than are the more ordinary and normal experiences of life. And they present the danger that the recipient may tend to "hark back" to a past event and a sacred date, and thereby fail to be an ever-growing and expanding soul.

To be "saved" ought to mean to be living a certain kind of life here and now, not to be able to report crossing a boundary on a certain day in the calendar. To be "saved" means to have love in the soul instead of hate, sweetness instead of bitterness, passion for righteousness and holiness instead of sin, forgiveness instead of grudge, an attitude of grace and tenderness instead of an attitude of judging. In short, it means a new nature, a new creation, the formation of a new character. And those things call for more than the event of seeing a light, or hearing a voice.

In my *Double Search*, I was drawing on my own experience when I said, in 1905: "The discovery of God and communion with Him are first fruits of the mystic nature of personality. The edge of the self is always touching a circle of life beyond itself to which it responds. The human heart is as sensitive to God as the retina is to light waves. The soul possesses a native

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yearning for intercourse and companionship which takes it to God as naturally as the homing instinct of the pigeon takes it to its birthplace. There is in every normal soul a spontaneous out-reach, a free play of spirit, which gives it onward yearning of unstilled desire. It is no mere subjective instinct. If it met no response it would be weeded out of the race. It would shrivel like a functionless organ. We could not long continue to reach out, to pray in faith, if we lost the assurance that there is a Person who cares and who actually corresponds with us.”<sup>1</sup>

It is by no means an easy matter for one who has this deeply grounded faith to present to others proofs of its significance, and especially of its objective validity. He can announce his conviction. He can become a voice crying in the wilderness, saying “hear ye, for I have seen.” But in the last resort it is and remains one man’s testimony to something which he cannot universalize, or render objective for others to see. Immediate experience as a living whole, unanalyzed and unreduced by reflection, needs no further proof or backing to the mind of the one who has it. But it can be transmitted *as reality* for others, only if and when the living whole of experience is atomized by descriptive analysis, its

<sup>1</sup> *Double Search* (London ed.), pp. 86-87; (Am. ed., The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia), pp. 101-102.

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unvarying aspects are seized upon, and it is given a symbolic interpretation in words which express universal ideas.

There are types of immediate experience of reality which do not submit easily to that kind of an interpretation. Josiah Royce used to ask his students to consider how difficult it would be to convey to anybody else the deep significance of the experience expressed in Tennyson's line:

"The tender grace of a day that is dead."

Poets and artists have subtle ways of suggesting to others what great experiences of beauty, or of love, or of personal loss and separation mean, but the reality is not interpreted by poets and artists in unvarying and universal terms. The best that the poet can do is to produce a spell upon the mind of the reader, and by imaginative imagery bring him into a living contact with a similar situation, through which he may get his own immediate experience. That is what is happening here in Tennyson's poem. The "Break, break, break" of the first line sets the heart-strings of the reader vibrating. Then come the simple pictures of the fisherman's boy at play, the sailor lad singing, and the home-coming ships, with the sudden arresting shock at the end.

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O well for the fisherman's boy  
That he shouts with his sister at play!

O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill:  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Then comes the flood of feeling with the lines:

But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.

Here there is no atomizing analysis of the situation, no reflective description in unvarying terms, no abstract and universal concepts, but responsive hearts know well enough, perhaps too well, the objective reality to which the poet's mind refers—an irreparable loss.

The reality of a great religious experience, as is true also of the experience of surpassing beauty, or of a consummate and immortal love, or the separation of two lives by the unbridged chasm of death, can be conveyed to others only through the imagery of suggestion, or by the convincing evidence of the *life-effects* that demonstrate some operative forces at work within the person. Integration of the person's life, increase in depth and power, moral transformation, fortification for facing difficulties and danger, and finally triumph—



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phant joy even through sufferings that must be borne, are signs and suggestions that creative energies from beyond the self have come into play.

No one can bear his own testimony to the fact that such dynamic effects have actually been revealed in him. When he comes back from a foreign land he can bring specimens of the country, as Columbus did, to prove that he has been there. But when he has made contact with eternal reality how can he tell it in words? Frederic Myers has St. Paul say:

Oh could I tell ye surely would believe it!  
Oh could I only say what I have seen!  
How should I tell or how can ye receive it,  
How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

The significant evidences are precisely those aspects of a person's life which he himself is estopped from proclaiming on the housetop. He cannot exhibit the treasures he has brought back. He cannot point to his control of temper. He cannot announce his degrees in integration. He cannot declare his increases in depth and power. He cannot signalize his quality of radiance, or his attainments in grace. To be self-conscious of such traits, to "cash them in" as evidences, to have an eye to a possible halo, is to throw the suspicion of doubt on their very existence. St. Paul was magnificently right when he said: "On my own behalf I will

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not glory save in my weaknesses," for divine power, he insisted, is made perfect in weakness.

Once in my early days of making extensive travels, I came to Richmond, Indiana, for an important evening address, after having had two nights on sleepers and a long previous period of heavy strain. I stood, as I spoke, under a gas chandelier of many flames producing an intense artificial heat above my head which added to the high temperature of a hot summer night. In the midst of my address, I felt the room grow dark and my audience looked to me as remote as though I were seeing them through a reversed telescope, and then I fainted, for the first, and only, time in my life. In a few moments I came back from my brief unconsciousness. I requested the audience to remain quiet for a short period. The silence fell upon us and enveloped us, and out of it I arose and finished my address.

The event quite naturally humiliated me and laid low my pride, but in my weakness I rose through inward help to a height I had not reached, and perhaps could not have reached, before my collapse came, and I got through the trying experience a sense of what the Apostle meant by "strength made perfect in weakness." There come times when one reaches the extremities of his own powers and knows that of *himself* he cannot stretch to the needed height. It seems just *then*

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as though the "lift" came from Beyond and carried him over. Perhaps one may claim, without spoiling his humility, that he has in some measure learned through his experiences to know and feel in his soul the significance of the Cross. I had come in my middle years to see, at least in some dim sense, that the Cross is at the Heart of any spiritual universe and is involved in any way of life that is God's way. Until sin comes to an end the Way of the Cross cannot cease to be. The course of genuine Love in a world like ours, where men sin and blunder, cannot run smooth for an Eternal Lover, nor for His disciples.

To take up, therefore, in the words of the prayer of my dear friend, John Wilhelm Rowntree, "the burden of the world's suffering" becomes, or should become, the normal daily business of life for one who has made real contacts with the Life of God. The true test of life is not the amount of *pure*, unalloyed happiness it can roll up and accumulate, but rather, as George Herbert Palmer used to say to us, the test of life is the amount of pain and suffering one can absorb without spoiling his joy. One comes at last to feel that "sacrifice" is not quite the right word for the self-giving and sharing aspect of life. It is too negative and too much implies an ascetic trait. These self-giving acts are great affirmations. The cup that must be drained, the baptism

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that is to be passed through, the Cross itself that must be borne, become raised above stern necessity and Stoic resignation, and become transmuted into loving service by the triumphant spirit of grace and joy. It was Thomas Traherne, in the seventeenth century, who called the Cross "A Tree set on fire with invisible flame that illumineth the world."

There are occasions, sure though seldom, when we feel that we have caught God's secret and know at last, as by a lightning flash, what life means. Such occasions give one a feeling like that which comes to a person who has climbed the Heimwehfluh at Interlaken with the sweep of the Jungfrau, the Monch and the Eiger in front of him. I am thinking of this marvelous scene as it used to be, in the days when Rendel Harris and I climbed this lookout point at a time when it stood apart in quiet solitude, before the days of escalators and cinematograph shows which have since come to spoil it. We had for a moment at least in exalted mood an escape from the dull, flat levels of space and time into the spell of a world of perfect beauty.

In one sense the experience of God is like that experience of beauty and in another sense it is unlike it. The word *Heimwehfluh* means "home-sick-peak." The name suggests that longing which one feels, when the experience of earthly beauty is at its highest, for a fade-

less and eternal beauty which does not need to be left for the descent to a commonplace level again. The "magic casement" has opened and one has had his momentary glimpse, but it brings a surge of homesickness for what is Beyond the casement.

There is this singular difference in the case of those peak-moments of the spirit, when we see into the Heart of things and discover what life means. If the experience has its touch of "Heimweh" it is of the nature of a longing, not to escape into a calm refuge, but to come back to the normal life and to bring into the everyday tasks of it at the foot of the hill, the freshness and power and new-born love that have surged into the soul on the heights. When I finished my middle years I had found this trail.







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